Congress hearings confirm Abu-MILF link–Biazon

STORY BELOW, COLUMN 2

Universe is beige, not turquoise

WASHINGTON—Whoops! Call the painter back. The color of the universe is not the turquoise that astronomers said.

UNIVERSE/A17

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Jail me, Estrada pleads

Ex-President launches strongest attack yet on Sandigan, Davide

AS IF his earlier scathing remarks in the media were not enough, Joseph Estrada yesterday assailed the three Sandiganbayan justices hearing his cases, daring them to "make a circus" out of his trial.

"So please jail me, allow my enemies to besmirch my reputation and make a circus out of the proceedings, then deny me my rights and the same privilege by gagging me," the jailed ex-President said.

"Your actions betray your true intentions to convict me at all costs. But I do not blame you. You must show that the justice system works, and what better way to prove it by making me an example that 'crime does not pay'—even without admissible evidence," he said.

Estrada, 64, unleashed his most hostile pronouncements yet against the anti-graft court, which he has been accusing of bias since he dismissed all his lawyers on Feb. 27, in a letter to Associate Justices Minita Nazario, Edilberto Sandoval and Teresita de Castro.

"You say that you are treating me fairly. I say you have done nothing but persecute me," Estrada said in the letter, which the court received at around 4:30 p.m.

He opened the letter by reiterating his rejection of all court-appointed lawyers, who are supposed to take over his legal defense.

For "at the outset," he said, "I do not wish to dignify any act which is only intended to create a semblance of legality to the farcical proceedings in your court."

He also enumerated grievances against Chief Justice Hilario Davide, Sandoval, De Castro, the Ombudsman and state prosecutors as well as Leonard de Vera, head of the anti-Estrada group E-Just.

The court's spokesperson Renato Bocar deferred comment on Estrada's letter dated March 7, a copy of which was sent to the INQUIRER by the Partido ng Masang Pilipino, Estrada's party.

Bocar said the nature of the letter "might need the personal reply of the justices themselves."

JAIL/A17

EDWIN BACASMAS/ERIK ARAZAS

WOMEN'S DAY
International Women's Day sees President Macapagal-Arroyo addressing women's issues as commencement speaker at the Philippine Women's University (left); launching the framework plan for women at the Ultra in Pasig with INQUIRER president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez and Women's Commission chairperson Aurora Javate-de Dios (below); and lending her face to impersonators at an anti-Balikatan rally in front of the US Embassy.

UN: Women still dying of pregnancy, childbirth

WHILE women, and a number of men, in most parts of the world yesterday marked International Women's Day, the tragic truth remained that thousands of women in developing countries continued to die of pregnancy and childbirth.

Every minute of every day, a woman dies due to pregnancy or childbirth, said the UN Children's Fund (Unicef).

"It is unacceptable that in the year 2002 so many women die in the basic act of giving life," Unicef director Carol Bellamy said.

"It is simply unjust that, in a world that has entered a new millennium with unprecedented technological breakthroughs, we allow so many women to die such easily preventable deaths."

"There has been no significant decline in maternal mortality since the early 1990s, and that is a tragedy," she added.

It is estimated that 515,000 women die every year in pregnancy or childbirth, almost all of them in developing countries.

UN/A4

Video gives Burnham kin fresh hopes

WICHITA, Kansas—The parents of Martin Burnham said a video showing him and his wife Gracia was giving them hope that the captors of the missionary couple were willing to negotiate for their release.

But the family said the tape, which showed Martin reading a list of five sweeping demands focusing on Muslims worldwide, appeared to be several months old.

"We were glad to see the tape—just to see them again..." Paul Burnham, Martin's father, told the Associated Press.

In Manila, Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes yesterday dismissed the tape as an old video meant for an international audience.

"We have seen that video... We have suspicions on who took the footage, but it would be too early to divulge that," Reyes said in Taglish in a radio interview.

Reyes said that "in our analysis," the Abu Sayyaf intended the video "for the foreign audience, to show their fellow terrorists that they are strong and should be given support."

Philippine television stations aired the footage of the Burnhams on Thursday. The short clip showed Martin Burnham saying their captors were "targeting US, European and other Western nations" because of alleged Western indifference to persecuted Muslims and US "support" for the Phil-

VIDEO/A16

Hostage boy says Abus released him

By Rocky Nazareno and Juliet L. Javellana

A CHILD once held hostage by the Abu Sayyaf testified Thursday night that he and two others were led by the bandits to safety from a hospital in Basilan last June 2, and were not rescued, as the military had claimed.

Eight-year-old RJ Recio gave this testimony during the executive (closed-door) session of the joint congressional hearing on the alleged ransom payments made for the release of hostages taken from a Palawan resort last May.

"The boy said they were guided out of the (Dr. Jose Ma. Torres Memorial Hospital in Lamitan) by the Abu Sayyaf and heard one of the bandits say: 'OK *na yan, bayad na yan* (It's OK, they're already paid for),'" a lawmaker, who spoke on condition of anonymity, told the INQUIRER.

The two other hostages then with RJ Recio were businessman Reghis Romero and his girlfriend Rissa Santos.

"There is a consensus (of belief) here today that Reghis Romero was released, and that he did not escape," Sen. Sergio Osmeña III said after the two-hour executive session. "And they believe that the rich hostages paid ransom."

But Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. said he was disappointed at Osmeña's failure to substantiate his earlier accusation that the government paid P17 million in ransom for the release of the Abu Sayyaf hostages.

Osmeña made the accusation last December. Yesterday, the senator said it had been established that Romero

HOSTAGE/A16

Biazon: Abu-MILF link confirmed

By Cynthia D. Balana
in Manila
and Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

THE JOINT congressional hearing on the hostage taking in Lamitan, Basilan, has confirmed the collusion between the Abu Sayyaf and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), Sen. Rodolfo Biazon yesterday said.

"Former hostages of the Abu Sayyaf, who were released by the terrorist group after payment of ransom, testified that the MILF was coddling, supporting and protecting the Abu Sayyaf against military operations," Biazon said.

But Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said the MILF could never be allied with the Abu Sayyaf "because we have a different agenda."

"We are a legitimate revolutionary organization and not a bunch of money-hungry kidnappers," Kabalu said.

The witnesses testified that sometime in the last quarter of last year the Abu Sayyaf took the hostages to MILF camps in Basilan after members of the bandit group escaped military encirclement in Lamitan. ***(See related story.)***

Biazon, vice chair of the Senate committee, said this was also the time that the military intensified operations that significantly dissipated the ranks

BIAZON/A16

Marcos 'son' gets 4 years for HK fraud

HONG KONG—A man claiming to be a son of the late President Ferdinand Marcos was given four years in prison for using false documents to try to withdraw US $90 billion from a nonexistent bank account, officials said Friday.

Tiburcio Villamor Tan Marcos, 53, was also fined HK $2,000 (US $256) late Thursday, prosecutor Ian Polson said.

Marcos was convicted on Feb. 22 of using a false instrument, two counts of copying false instruments and breaching his conditions of stay in Hong Kong.

Deputy Judge Julia Livesey had delayed sentencing so Marcos could be examined by psychiatrists, but Polson said Marcos was not found to have an apparent mental illness.

Appealing for leniency, Marcos argued that a harsh sentence might jeopardize the good relations betwee Hong Kong's government and th

MARCOS/A1

Second FRONT PAGE

After Erap issue, pols take on Comelec feud

By Cynthia D. Balana and Juliet L. Javellana

AFTER stepping into the controversy involving ousted President Joseph Estrada's knees and whether these should be sent into exile, the leaders of several political parties have set their sights on the feuding going on at the Commission on Elections that has virtually paralyzed that body for one year now.

The political leaders—Senate President Franklin Drilon, House Speaker Jose de Venecia, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel and Senators Blas Ople and Edgardo Angara—were reportedly prompted to act after noting that the squabbling at the Comelec was getting out of hand and threatening to imperil future elections.

Pimentel said the political leaders will hold a dialogue with Comelec Chairman Alfredo Benipayo and the six other commissioners on Monday at the Manila Hotel to find ways to settle their differences.

Locked in intramural infighting are the three appointees of President Macapagal-Arroyo led by Benipayo, and the four commissioners who were appointed by ousted President Joseph Estrada led by Luzviminda Tancangco.

"We cannot let the unhealthy situation at the Comelec drag on," Pimentel said.

Pimentel said the quarrel between the two factions has become so serious it is now being waged outside the Comelec.

Although any link has yet to be established, Comelec infighting has resulted in the murder of one middle level manager allegedly by another manager she had replaced.

Ople described the Comelec as a "dysfunctional body hobbled by internal conflicts and chronic deadlocks."

He said the intervention in the Comelec crisis was suggested by De Venecia at the leaders caucus that Ople convened Thursday at the Manila Hotel.

The political leaders and the heads of 10 political parties agreed to meet with the commissioners and Benipayo, whose confirmation ironically has yet to be affirmed by the Commission on Appointments.

"We will tell them (commissioners) that Congress is not powerless to do anything," Ople said. "If they cannot get their act together, we can pass a law declaring all seats on the commission vacant."

As this developed, administration Rep. Prospero Pichay Jr. filed yesterday his formal opposition to the confirmation of Benipayo and Resurreccion Borra at the Commission on Elections.

Pichay's two-page opposition was filed with the Commission on Appointments, which is comprised of senators and congressmen.

WOMAN NO MORE? Education Secretary Raul Roco, who was named an "honorary woman" by women's groups years ago for his espousal of women's issues, has drawn the ire of the female employees of his department on, of all days, International Women's Day yesterday, where he shared the spotlight with President Macapagal-Arroyo at the launching of the framework plan for women at the Ultra in Pasig City.

EDWIN BACASMAS

On Women's Day, Roco gets taste of 'female people power'

By Donna S. Cueto

ON WOMEN'S Day, Education Secretary and honorary woman Raul Roco faced a "women's people power" at his department which called for his resignation for alleged "irregularities."

About 100 Department of Education employees, mostly women, staged a rally and noise barrage from noon to 1 p.m. at the DepEd Central Office yesterday.

They decried Roco's manner of spending education funds while cutting employees' benefits.

Among the "irregularities" they cited were his two-day use of a private helicopter that cost DepEd P217,292.25 to visit school building constructions; his hiring of highly paid consultants; paying huge fees for a survey of the DepEd, and the alleged lack of due process in the suspension of department employees.

The employees also criticized Roco for reportedly making the department pay the salary of his wife's personal driver.

Roco denied the irregularities. He justified his use of private helicopters in October last year, saying the situation called for it.

He said the money used to pay for the helicopter rented from Cebu Pacific Air came from the funds of the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP), a government program for the 22 poorest provinces.

"You cannot manage (to get around quickly) in this country unless you fly," he said yesterday.

"I didn't even have to go that extra mile (flying)," Roco said, but he stressed he had to show that he was serious in monitoring the TEEP projects in the provinces.

Answering allegations about his hiring of consultants, Roco denied he was paying them more than was allowed in the budget.

"That is false, absolutely false. I can pay up to P50,000 (per person)," he said.

Roco said he has 12 consultants, and that they "were working without overtime pay."

"They are proud of themselves and they are as professional as can be," he added.

Roco also said he had hired a firm to do surveys about the DepEd because he was using this as a "policy tool."

He said his wife's personal driver was also his driver at DepEd.

"I am entitled to two drivers and I don't use one," he said. "So why don't I let my wife use him?"

Roco also said he was the only Cabinet member who did not use a backup driver.

He said the allegations of the DepEd employees would not taint his integrity and honor since they did not really involve anomalies.

The education chief said there appeared to be a smear campaign against him being orchestrated by his political enemies, since he has always come out on top of surveys, alluding perhaps to a possible run at the 2004 Presidential elections.

NPA attacks gov't project in Quezon

COMMUNIST guerrillas raided a government dam project in Quezon province, robbing the guards of their guns and warning they would come back for more, the military said Friday.

About 30 New People's Army gunmen crept up to the Umiray-Angat Transbasin Project site in General Nakar town early Wednesday and detained an unspecified number of workers and security guards for nearly eight hours, a military report said.

The rebels seized two shotguns and two revolvers from the guards, it said. The NPA also stole radio equipment, a power generator, a hand drill and a sack of rice, it added. They left with a warning that they would return and that the guards should turn over more guns in the future.

The NPA is the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines. The government suspended talks with the communist rebels last year after the NPA assassinated two members of Congress.

According to the military report, the rebels, belonging to the Marxist-Leninist Party of the Philippines' Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan, entered the firm's premises in Barangay Umiray, Nakar at 8:15 a.m. and quickly disarmed the guards.

For eight hours, the group held the guards and employees captive.

Before leaving, the group left a handwritten message demanding five more weapons—two grenade launchers and three M14s with eight magazines of bullets. ***AFP with a report from Martin Marfil***

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Neither quake nor kidnapping deter health workers, US forces

By Armand N. Nocum

BONGAO, Tawi-tawi—Earthquakes, threats of kidnapping and the barest logistics did not deter 70,000 government health workers and 300,000 volunteers from administering the anti-polio vaccine to 12 million children nationwide.

And as the anti-polio campaign ended yesterday, health officials were optimistic of surpassing the 98-percent saturation rate that the Department of Health achieved in the first phase of its vaccination campaign last month.

Dr. Paulo Froes, World Health Organization medical officer in charge of the expanded program on immunization, credited the campaign's success to the people who served as its backbone.

"The anonymous health workers and volunteers—these are the guys carrying the campaign to get rid of polio in the Philippines," Froes told health reporters in Zamboanga City Thursday night.

Dr. Consuelo D. Aranas, child health and nutrition officer of the United Nations Children's Fund, echoed the observation.

According to Aranas, the fight against the mutant polio virus was greatly boosted by medical and nursing students, barangay officials, village association officers, members of nongovernment organizations and local government officials.

She recalled an incident in General Santos City where a disabled man personally administered the anti-polio vaccine to children in his neighborhood.

In quite another campaign, US military engineers are preparing to build roads, helicopter landing zones and a boat launch in support of an anti-terror mission in Mindanao.

According to a joint Filipino-American statement issued yesterday, a 10-member team will be in Basilan for eight days starting March 15 "to determine the needs of the (Filipino military) and US forces who are conducting a train-advise-and-assist mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom-Philippines."

"Some areas the engineers will survey for possible improvements include the building or improving of helicopter landing zones, expeditionary roads, and civil affairs projects that include digging freshwater wells and building water catchment and distribution systems," the statement said. ***With an AFP report***

Coco tillers nix sale of SMC shares

MILITANT farmers groups vowed yesterday to block the planned move by the Presidential Commission on Good Government to sell the coconut levy fund shares in San Miguel Corp. once the Sandiganbayan rules the contested shares belong to the government.

Delio Apolinar, spokesperson of the Bicol Coconut Planters Association, said, "selling the coco levy shares in SMC is tantamount to selling the interest of small coconut farmers."

Apolinar said the Dec. 14 Supreme Court ruling that the coco levy funds were "prima facie" public funds only gave the government the right to vote the 27 percent coco levy shares in SMC but did not resolve the question of ownership of the shares.

Apolinar said the coconut levy fund shares belong to the farmers who paid the levy during the Marcos regime, and it should immediately be returned to the farmers.

"Genuine small coconut farmers must resist the planned sale of coco levy shares to Danding Cojuangco and continue to demand his ouster from SMC," Apolinar said.

Ruben Carranza Jr., PCGG commissioner, admitted the other day that Cojuangco could end up buying the coco levy's shares once the government decides to sell them. ***Gerald Lacuarta***

Congress resets youth, barangay polls to July 15

THE BARANGAY and Sangguniang Kabataan elections will be held simultaneously on July 15 this year.

House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla said this was the consensus reached last night by the bicameral conference committee of the Senate and the House which met to reconcile the conflicting bills on the two elections.

Padilla also said that to remove the age overlap, the two committees agreed that the SK voters and candidates would be those aged 15 to 18. Those turning 18 on the day of the elections would not be qualified to vote or run for the SK. Voters for the barangay polls, however, should be 18 and above.

Padilla said the funds for the polls would come from the P1.1 billion set aside by the national government, plus the P300 million savings of the Comelec and 10 percent of SK funds. ***Juliet Javellana***

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Care for environment and write off RP debts

By G. Lacuarta

THE DEPARTMENT of Environment and Natural Resources is hoping to write off part of the country's debt to the United States under a "debt-for-nature swap" program of the American government.

Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez expressed the hope to new US Ambassador to the Philippines Francis J. Ricciardone during the latter's courtesy call at the DENR yesterday.

Alvarez told Ricciardone the Philippines had applied for and has been granted eligibility in the US debt-for-nature program.

The US Tropical Forest Conservation Act of 1988 provides for the cancellation of portions of loans owed to the US by debtor countries that promise to support in their local currencies domestic bio-diversity conservation programs.

Under the law, a third party such as an international nongovernment organization (NGO) is allowed to buy a country's loans at a discount. In return, the debtor country must commit to fund bio-diversity conservation and protection activities.

Alvarez said the DENR has applied for an estimated $5 million, or P250 million, in grants under the debt-for-nature program.

Alvarez said the money would be used toward the effective management of the country's coastal and marine resources and to help implement DENR Administrative Order No. 17 which delineates and reserves 15 kilometers of municipal waters for some one million poor fishermen.

"The funds will also be utilized to establish marine sanctuaries, seaweed farms, giant clams and oyster culture farms, and rehabilitate mangrove areas by our coastal communities, which are the most marginalized sectors of our society," Alvarez said.

The DENR also plans to use the funds from the debt swap for measures to buffer the impact of the coming El Niño on the coastal communities from Bolinao to the Sulu seas.

According to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, the country's external debt currently stands at $52.426 billion, 56 percent of which is to the US, 26 percent to Japan and remaining 16 percent to 24 other countries.

Alvarez said the DENR has been primed toward implementing programs to save the country's coastal and marine resources, which continue to suffer from over-fishing, destructive fishing techniques, dredging, landfills, mining of sand and coral, coastal construction, waste discharges and sedimentation.

A recent study said some 98 percent of Philippine coastal and marine resources are at risk from human activity and 70 percent are at high or very high risk. Only four percent are in excellent condition; 27 percent in poor condition, and 42 percent in fair condition.

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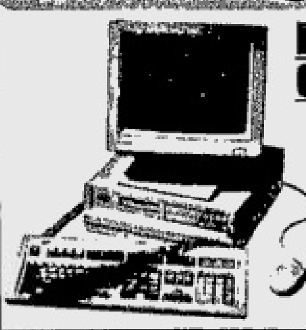

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The trademark **FAMILY** was adopted and first used by **PAGODA PHILIPPINES INC.** for rubbing alcohol on January 5, 1969. Subsequently, **PAGODA PHILIPPINES, INC.** extended the use of the trademark **FAMILY** to various goods such as toothpaste, absorbent cotton, mosquito coils, insecticides, cosmetics, food products, liquid detergents, chicharon, nuts, pop corn, cheese curls, candies, chocolate bars, jellies, powdered fruit & chocolate juices, canned goods such as sardines, mackerel, corned beef, green peas, milk, fruit juices, chocolate, fruit cocktail, etc., and hand sanitizer.

To protect its intellectual property rights to the trademark **FAMILY, PAGODA PHILIPPINES, INC.** applied for, and was issued by the Philippine Patent Office (later replaced by the Bureau of Patents, Trademarks and Technology Transfer and presently, by the Intellectual Property Office), the following registration certificates:

1) Registration Certificate No. 29065 issued on April 13, 1981;
2) Registration Certificate No. 51745 issued on November 5, 1991;
3) Registration Certificate No: 65188 issued on September 2, 1997;
4) Registration Certificate No. 4-1994-96831 issued on July 12, 2000.

In addition, there are pending for examination and approval by the Intellectual Property Office various applications filed by **PAGODA PHILIPPINES, INC.** for the additional goods upon which it has been using the trademark **FAMILY.**

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It's not a man's world out there

By Blanche S. Rivera

THEY have suffered many burns in life, mostly caused by men. But it's not a man's world out there, and some burned but brave women are out to prove that.

Maria Concepcion Raz, for one, is working to realize her life-long dream of establishing her own contracting firm. She graduated with a certificate in welding from the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority.

Life has not been generous to Raz, 34, who even with her degree in civil engineering, could not make it in the male-dominated world of construction a decade ago primarily because she is a woman.

Elian Abulencia, another engineering graduate who studied jewelry making at the Tesda Women's Center (TWC), said many of the companies where she sought employment wanted to delegate her to office work and refused to deploy her to construction sites.

"Women ... generally obtain jobs that are low-end and low-value; they are made to do dirty and disastrous work that have no promise of moving up," Tesda director general Lucy Lazo said.

With a P780-million grant from the Japanese government in 1998, the TWC was established to train women workers in both traditional and non-traditional trade like welding, automotive, jewelry making, ceramics, food processing, and hotel and restaurant management.

Welding and automotive, skills that are traditionally reserved for men, are among the most popular courses at the TWC. These ensure a good percentage of employability after the students complete their training, the Tesda chief said.

Lazo explained that the non-traditional courses were drafted to "bridge the gender divide" in the country's workforce and give opportunities to women who have the attitude and skills to excel in a man's field.

A shipping company based in Cebu City actually prefers women welders to the men because of their accuracy and sharpness. There is also a "long list" of companies awaiting the automotive graduates, said Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas.

"We're not trying to compete with the men, but we also have the skills to do what they do, so we do it," said Raz, who finished her welding course in March 2000 and is now self-employed.

Raz learned of the TWC welding course through a TV advertisement when she came back to the country after working as building maintenance person in Brunei.

Left with no job here in 1998, Raz decided to enroll and see where welding could take an unlicensed engineer like her.

Welding, apparently, took her back to the dream she had abandoned when the reality of gender discrimination hit her: she would again work to set up her own contracting firm with her brother, who is also a welder.

MARIA CONCEPCION RAZ, welder

ELIAN ABULENCIA, jewelry maker

"It's difficult of course, but then again, everything's difficult. We just have to persevere," Raz said, adding she can live off her income as a welder.

Pricilla Marilla, too, is trying to earn a living with her ceramics business to raise her three children after she separated from her husband.

Marilla, 40, took up the ceramics course last year. She had already taken up a six-month course in computer applications at the Tesda, formerly the National Manpower Youth Council, in 1982.

Marilla and Raz had been chosen by Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste as recipients of livelihood loans from the senator's Libro ni Loren project launched last month. Marilla got P10,000 and Raz P15,000 to boost their business plans.

Marilla said she would use the money to put up a ceramics and candles business in her hometown in Zamboanga, where she plans to relocate soon to teach the craft to students and housewives there.

PRICILLA MARILLA, ceramics maker

She said she wanted to help the high school graduates who could not afford to go to college and the women who feel bored or useless at home.

"Many ceramists do not want to help those who are just starting out, but I want to share this art with them. I don't want my skill to die with me," Marilla said.

Marilla's husband had been opposed to her enrolling at the TWC to learn a craft, but she defied the man and decided to make a living on her own while her kids go to college. The couple separated only two months ago.

She said she dreams of making quality ceramics that can rival the products of China, the leading exporter of ceramics in the world. She said Filipinos are technically more meticulous in their molding, but they have little of the investment needed to penetrate the market.

Raz and Abulencia, on the other hand, have chosen to endure the burns and cuts from welding and jewelry making, but they would willingly prefer these to the burns from discrimination.

"If you don't let anyone step on you, then they will not," Raz said. "You just have to focus and go on even of you get burned."

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PER CDI-NCR PERMIT NO. 1721, SERIES OF 2001

UN: Women . . .

From page A1

The probability of dying in childbirth in a developed country is one in 4,100, but in a developing nation it is one in 13.

The low social status of many women limits their access to basic education and health care and thus deprives them of information which would enable them to make the best decisions on child bearing, health and nutrition, Bellamy said.

While the deaths are preventable, there is a lack of political commitment, and the concomitant resources, on the issue.

Family planning

In Manila yesterday, President Macapagal-Arroyo said her government would pursue "responsible parenthood."

The policy would be to let parents decide what method to use to control the number of their children.

"They should determine . . . how many children they can afford to raise. Having determined (that), it is important that their choice of implementing their decision be made in accordance with their religious and cultural beliefs," Ms Macapagal said during commencement exercises at the Philippine Women's University.

For the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan), Ms Macapagal may be a woman but, like former President Corazon Aquino, she failed to improve the lives of Filipino women.

"Obviously, (the two women Presidents) represent the interests of the elite. Their class origin proved to be above everything else, including their gender," said Rita Baua, Bayan international relations officer and coordinator for women's concerns.

"Meanwhile, working-class women still contend with the double burden of having to care for their families and having to find a decent means of livelihood in the midst of the economic crisis, gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment," Baua said.

Women's rights violator

In Davao City, militant groups said the government became the No. 1 violator of women's rights when it allowed the entry of foreign troops into the country.

Lawig Bubai, a nongovernment organization working for prostituted women, said it had documented at least 36 women who "migrated" to Zamboanga City for the Balikatan military exercises. It said some of them were still children.

The underground women's group Makibaka tagged Ms Macapagal as "among the best of US puppets, one who will not bat an eyelash in turning our country into a huge war room for US troops regardless of the dangers it poses to the lives of Filipinos."

At the gates of Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga, some 300 women activists held a rally to protest the government's "anti-people" and "anti-women" policies."

The Pagkakaisa ng Kababaihan para sa Inang Bayan (KaisaKa) and the Women Against Globalization, Women Against War! (Wag-War!) said Ms Macapagal was "no real mother to the Filipino people but the mother of globalization."

In Baguio City, some 150 women from indigenous groups, schools and nongovernment organizations joined a march at the city's main streets to protest the Balikatan.

Some of the women displayed large condoms with the words "GMA Bush lover."

At least 1,300 protesters staged separate rallies in Cebu, Negros Occidental and Iloilo, accusing Ms Macapagal of worsening poverty and exploitation of women in her short stay in power.

Afghan women

In New York, US First Lady Laura Bush joined United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan in the UN's observance of International Women's Day. The affair focused on the plight of girls and women in Afghanistan.

Queen Noor of Jordan and Sima Wali, a delegate to the UN peace talks on Afghanistan, were also on the list of speakers at the commemoration at the UN headquarters.

In his message, Annan cited last year's ouster of Afghanistan's hard-line Taliban rulers who had banned women from working and girls from attending school.

"In Afghanistan, after years of conflict, hardship and human rights violations, hope has returned to women and girls who are yet again exercising their rights to education, work and an active role in society," Annan said.

According to the United Nations, only about 3 percent of girls received some form of primary education during the Taliban's rule. Afghanistan still has the second highest maternal mortality rate in the world. Afghan women have also suffered domestic and other types of violence for the past 25 years, not just under the Taliban.

Russian women

International Women's Day is one of Russia's biggest holidays, with mothers, wives and daughters feted with flowers, chocolate and television tributes.

During an informal Kremlin meeting with women on the eve of the holiday, Russian President Vladimir Putin encouraged more Russian women to participate in public life.

"Unfortunately, we have a very small number of women in the state's power structure," Putin said.

He added that in Russian politics there were "not enough traditional womanly characteristics, which are able to smooth over rough corners and seek compromise."

One of the best places for women to be on March 8 was the Siberian city of Yekaterinburg.

To mark International Women's Day, the police decided to hand flowers or perfume instead of fines to erring female drivers, unless they were involved in a serious road accident, ITAR-TASS reported. ***Reports from Dona Pazzibugan and Agnes Donato in Manila; Ayan Mellejor and Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Tonette Orejas, Central Luzon Desk; Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; AFP; and AP***

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, March 9, 2002
3rd Week of Lent

1st Reading: Hos 6:1-6
Gospel: Lk 18:9-14

Jesus told another parable to some persons fully convinced of their own righteousness, who looked down on others, "Two men went up to the Temple to pray; one was a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood by himself and said: 'I thank you, God, that I am not like other people, grasping, crooked, adulterous, or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give the tenth of all my income to the Temple.'

In the meantime the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast saying: 'O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.'

I tell you, when this man went down to his house, he had been set right with God, but not the other. For whoever makes himself out to be great will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be raised."

Commentary

One of Jesus' favorite themes: the great will be humbled, the humble will be lifted up. The last shall be first. Perhaps he learned it from his mother: "He has put down the mighty from their thrones and lifted up those who are downtrodden. He has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty." (Lk 1:52-53) The Bible they both loved to ponder is full of such stories, where God favors the weak and lowly: Joseph the slave, Moses the tongue-tied, David the shepherd king (see tomorrow's first reading). Jesus continues the tradition: born in a stable, a carpenter's son of Nazareth, shepherds and fishermen his first followers. What good news! What a relief! God delights in us ordinary and everyday people. Truth is better than image. When you find your few minutes to sit with God today, enjoy the freedom of being loved as you are.

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CIVIL LAW (CONTRACTS: SPECIAL CONTRACTS)—Contract of surety—A contract of surety is an agreement where a party called the surety guarantees the performance by another party called the principal or obligor of an obligation or undertaking in favor of a third person called the oblige. Specifically, suretyship is a contractual relationship resulting from an agreement whereby one person, the surety, engages to be answerable for the debt, default or miscarriage or another, known as the principal. The obligation of a surety cannot be extended by implication beyond its specified limits. When a surety executes a bond, it does not guarantee that the plaintiff's cause of action is meritorious, and that it will be responsible for all the costs that may be adjudicated against its principal in case the action fails. The extent of a surety's liability is determined only by the clause of the contract of suretyship. A contract of surety is not presumed; it cannot extend to more than what is stipulated. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Pardo, First Division, Visayan Surety and Insurance Corporation v. Court of Appeals, G.R. No. 127261, September 7, 2001]

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Estrada pal, others face new raps in BW Resources scam

By Norman Bordadora

TAN

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice is set to file new criminal charges against a crony of ousted President Joseph Estrada and several other business executives for violations of the Revised Securities Act arising from the BW Resources scandal.

DOJ prosecutors found Estrada pal Dante Tan and several alleged accomplices and co-conspirators from different securities firms culpable for four new violations of the country's securities laws, which reportedly garnered for them P800 million in undue profits.

"They almost caused the collapse of the stock market," said Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño said the prosecution panel, chaired by assistant chief state prosecutor Nilo Mariano, recommended P1 million in bail for every criminal charge for each of the accused.

Charged were Tan, Raul de Castro of A.T. de Castro Securities Corp., Federico Galang of PCCI Securities Brokers Corp. and Eduardo Co of Aurora Securities for alleged violation of Section 26 of the Revised Securities Act by creating false market activity in BW shares through "wash sales."

Several John and Jane Does from PCCI Securities and Securities 2000 Inc. were also charged with "wash sales" violations.

Tan, De Castro, Jimmy Juan, Mario Juan, Hermogenes Laddaran, Eduardo Lim Jr. of Securities 2000 Inc. and Belson Securities Inc. were charged with also violating Section 26 by creating the appearance of active trading in BW shares through a "matched orders" scheme.

Other John and Jane Does from Securities 2000 and Belson Securities were also charged with "matched orders" violations.

Tan and De Castro were likewise charged with violation of Section 27 of the RSA through a "marking the close" scheme in the trading of BW shares.

Tan, Lim, Laddaran and Mario Juan were also cited for violation of both Sections 26 and 27 by abusing the EQ Trade Facility in the trading of BW shares.

The four violations were not included in the first charge sheet filed against Tan and his co-accused before the Pasig City Regional Trial Court.

The four new charges were previously dismissed by the prosecutors in preliminary investigation and were referred back to the Securities and Exchange Commission for further investigation.

The panel is also looking into the possibility of charging Tan and his fellow respondents with estafa under Article 315 of the Revised Penal Code.

"From the very start, Dante Tan was assisted by his associates and co-conspirators . . . in order to cause a massive manipulation of the market in BW shares," read the panel resolution.

"As a result, numerous investors were tricked and deceived into buying BW shares only to lose their investments and suffer damage when the price of the shares collapsed for lack of corporate fundamentals to support investments in said shares," the panel said.

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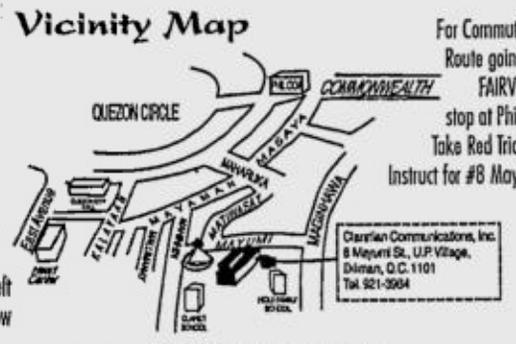

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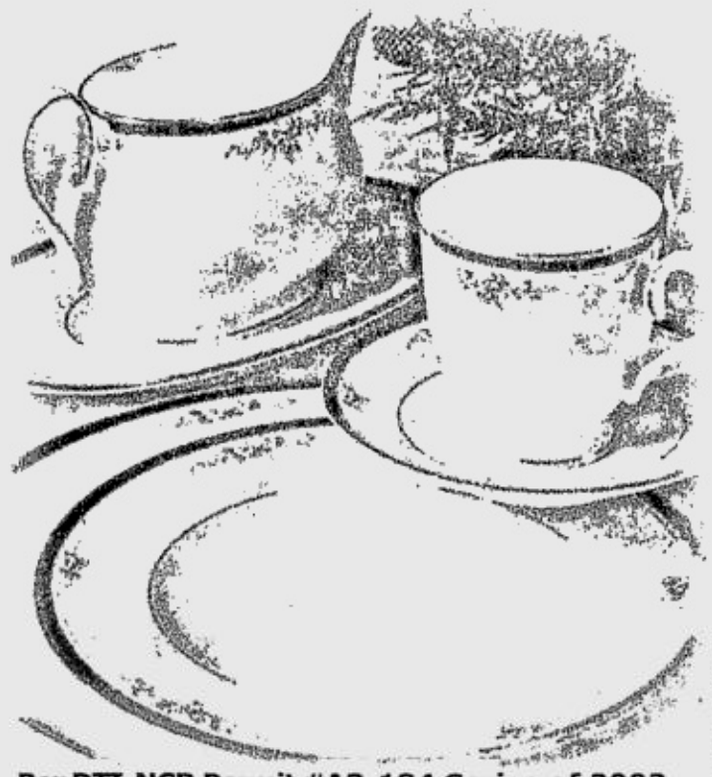

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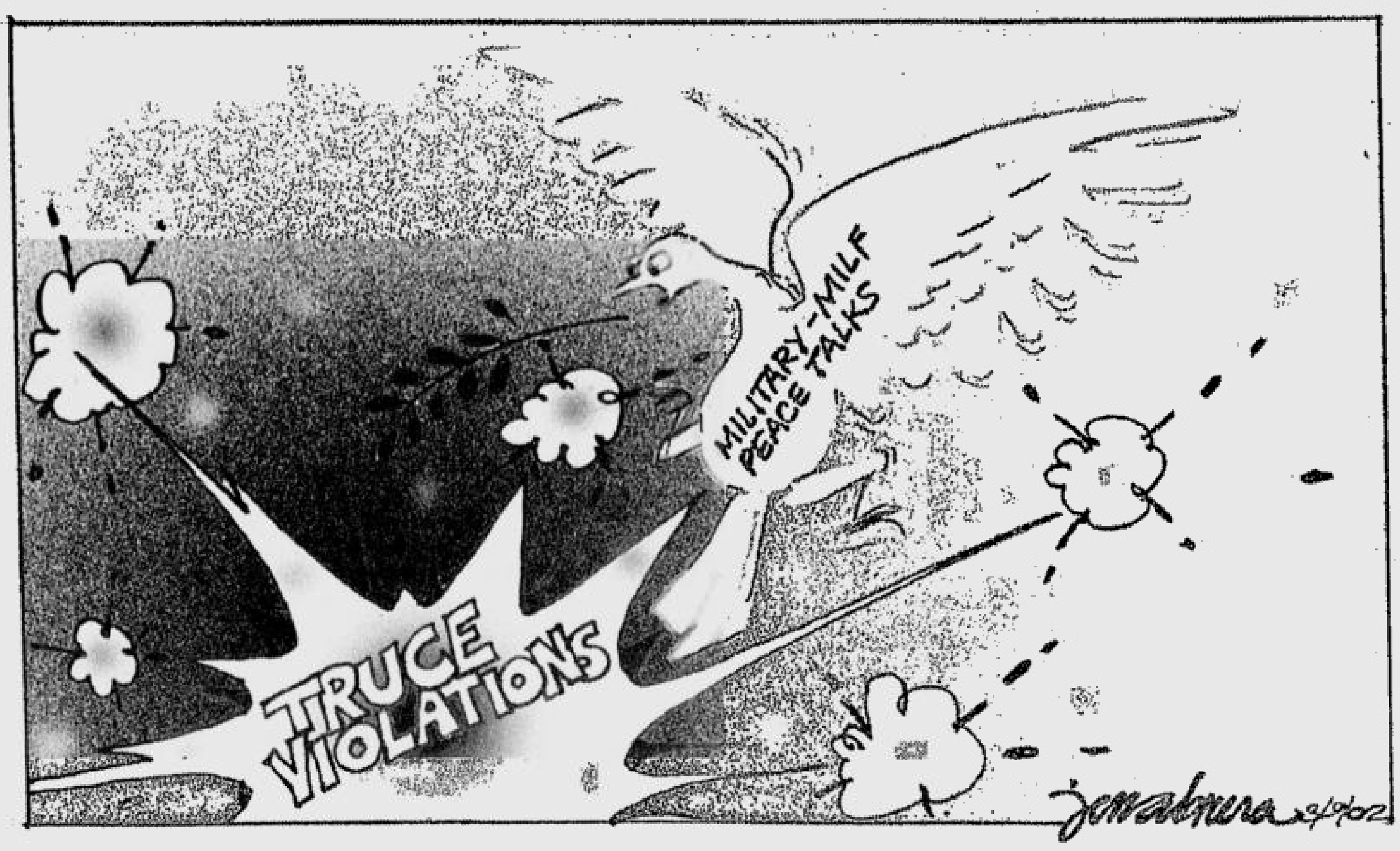

Getting Erap off the hook

EDITORIAL

SEVERAL political leaders have launched an initiative to defuse what they perceive as a "gathering crisis" over attempts to allow Joseph Estrada to undergo medical treatment or go on exile abroad.

Party elders like Speaker Jose de Venecia of the administration Lakas-NUCD, Sen. Edgardo Angara of the opposition LDP, Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel and Sen. Blas Ople seldom see eye to eye on issues, but this time they have coalesced behind a move to break the impasse over proposals for Estrada's departure. The objective of their initiative is rather vague. They are not clear about whether they are seeking to allow Estrada to undergo medical treatment abroad or to go on exile. All they say is that the initiative is about using "parliamentary diplomacy" to promote the "healing process" through political back-channels, and to avert a political crisis.

Stripped of its claptrap, the initiative is really an attempt to reach a political solution in the face of Estrada's new effort to incite popular unrest in order to pressure the Macapagal administration and the Sandiganbayan to allow him to go abroad. The political leaders have fallen for Estrada's maneuver by making it a given that if he were not allowed to leave, there would be not only political turbulence but civil strife.

They are falling in line behind what Estrada really wants to do after he dismissed his lawyers, denounced the judicial system as being incapable of giving him a fair trial and indeed put himself above the jurisdiction of the law of the land. He is now an outlaw and he seeks to transfer his cases from the courts of justice to the political arena for a political solution.

Reduced to its fundamentals, the "back-channel" parliamentary "diplomacy" is really about getting Estrada off the hook from the criminal charges he faces. The proponents of this initiative have played into Estrada's hands.

The initiative raises the specter of unrest if Estrada's demands are not granted. This specter is exaggerated. It echoes Estrada's threats of a crisis if the Sandiganbayan and the administration reject political pressure seeking to allow him to go abroad for medical treatment. The capacity of Estrada to mobilize masses behind this form of political blackmail is in doubt. While there have been moves to recruit soldiers and the urban poor to back Estrada's threats, there is nothing new about them. Such recruitment has been going on for some time, with negligible results.

The politicians' intervention comes on the heels of Estrada's rejection of the move to allow him to go on exile. He insists on the formula of medical treatment, and gives assurances that he would return once the treatment is completed. Exile is anathema to him, he says.

But very few believe that once he is allowed to go, he would return. There are strong reasons for him not to come back. The criminal cases will continue even though he has dismissed his lawyers and has put himself above the judicial system. The trial has to go ahead for the sake of maintaining the integrity and credibility of the judicial system. The Sandiganbayan has started to be more firm in proceeding with the arraignment of Estrada and in warning lawyers that it would not hesitate to hold them in contempt of court if they continue to heap abuse on the court.

What the "parliamentary diplomacy" seeks is to abort the judicial process and evade a showdown on very fundamental issues stemming from the cases. The issues are about the ability of the executive to enforce the law and of the courts to uphold the principle of fairness, due process and equality before the law, and about accountability of high public officials for their deeds. What Estrada wants is unequal justice: one standard for him, marked with leniency and privilege, and another standard for the rest of the citizens. His notion of law flows from his belief that since he had been president, he is entitled to certain privileges.

The nation and public opinion have been sharply polarized by Estrada's defiant behavior in his trial. He is rallying his followers to join him as an outlaw. Estrada's lawlessness challenges all the notions stemming from the majesty of the law and orderly government. The political leaders seek to deflect this challenge through a formula that in effect undermines the judicial system. Their initiative will contribute to the erosion of public confidence in the judiciary.

Memories and felicitations

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

TODAY is the 111th birth anniversary of Dr. Jose P. Laurel, one of the outstanding figures of our race, who distinguished himself in various capacities in the service of our people. As President of the Philippines during the Japanese occupation in World War II, he tried his best to mitigate the sufferings of his countrymen under the heel of the enemy occupant. Before and after that war, he also served as a legislator and as a jurist, thereby gaining the added distinction of having occupied prominent positions in all three major branches of the government.

Laurel was well prepared for the tasks that awaited him, having placed second in the bar examinations of 1915 and thereafter taken up post-graduate studies at Yale and the Sorbonne. He started his public career as a lowly employee and eventually rose to the position of secretary of the interior in the Cabinet of Governor General Leonard Wood, with whom he tangled over the Conley case. When he was ordered to reinstate an American detective found guilty in an administrative case of bribery and immorality, he resigned and thus triggered the Cabinet Crisis of 1923. This placed the authoritarian Wood in a direct confrontation with the Filipino leaders in the American administration and focused national attention on Secretary Laurel. He was only 32 years old then.

Laurel was elected to the Senate before the war, sided with Osmeña during the *pro-anti* controversy, chaired the committee on the bill of rights in the Constitutional Convention of 1934, was appointed to the Supreme Court by Quezon, who later described him as wielding the most powerful pen in that tribunal, and was fated to be the wartime leader against the Japanese invader. He ran against incumbent President Elpidio Quirino in the presidential election of 1949, which many believe he won except for the birds and the bees that voted for his opponent. Laurel was vindicated when he topped the senatorial election in 1951. He did not stand for reelection and died on Nov. 6, 1959.

Laurel's brilliance was many-faceted. He was a statesman of the highest water, an ardent nationalist, an erudite jurist, an adept parliamentarian, an experienced teacher, a skillful lawyer, a banker economist, and a man of the people. He was also a spellbinder, especially when defending the common man or his favorite theme that "no one can love the Filipino more than the Filipino himself." And, yes, he also played the violin but, alas, not with his accustomed expertise.

The capacity in which he is least known is as an educator, except to his law students, who learned much about republican government from his lectures and books that were used extensively in many law colleges. It was as a law professor that he gained much of his reputation as a constitutionalist and, later, the political support of his students. He had much admiration for the teacher and was for many years the chancellor of the National Teachers College. His most enduring legacy as an educator is the Lyceum of the Philippines, which he founded 50 years ago.

The golden anniversary celebration of the Lyceum this year is especially memorable because of the participation last Thursday of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as guest of honor at the convocation conferring the Jose P. Laurel Award on Chief Justice Hilario G. Davide Jr. for his own outstanding achievements, notably as a jurist in the high traditions of his eminent exemplar. President Macapagal has also accepted the invitation to attend the Mass and floral offering in Tanauan, Batangas, in commemoration of Dr. Laurel's birth anniversary.

I have fond memories of the Lyceum, which Dr. Laurel envisioned as "the Alexandria of the East." I can say that I was there "at the beginning" and helped wet-nurse the infant institution with "the Old Man" himself, as we called him, his son Executive Secretary Sotero H. Laurel, and the late Dean Jose Adeva of the School of Arts and Sciences. I was Teroy's assistant and secretary of the School of Law. I remember our staying up late into the night during those early months tying up the loose ends of the still fledgling university.

The School of Law was the centerpiece of the Lyceum then and attracted a record enrollment at its inception, probably because of its distinguished faculty. Claro M. Recto was the dean, with Ambrosio Padilla as vice dean. Among its top-rate professors were Jose P. Laurel, Pedro Sabido, Arturo Tolentino, Jovito Salonga, Leon Ma. Gurrero, Eduardo Caguioa, Felixberto Serrano, Desiderio Jurado and Ramon Oben. Neptali A. Gonzales and I were neophyte instructors assigned minor subjects in the first year.

The succeeding roster of deans included Luciano Salazar, Jesus G. Barrera, Cecilia Muñoz Palma, Felix Makasiar, Emilio de la Paz Jr., and me. During my stint, two of our graduates placed among the top 10 in the bar examinations. An impressive number of our alumni are now in the judiciary or in the successful private practice of their profession. Some are members of Congress. One of the alumni honored at the awards convocation this year was Erlinda Centeno Versoza, who retired recently as bar confidant of the Supreme Court.

On this happy occasion, I extend my warm congratulations to the Lyceum for maintaining the high ideals of "Veritas et Fortitudo," the motto chosen for it by its visionary founder whose faith in the resiliency of the youth never wavered. I am also elated to greet my former colleagues in the School of Law and particularly our loyal alumni who believe with Dr. Jose P. Laurel that the destiny of a nation is writ large by its schools.

A historical turning

COMMENTARY

Sylvia L. Mayuga

IF Erap's impeachment and its aftermath are ongoing lessons on the never-ending struggle between Philippine law and *trapo* politics, the zero bonds controversy has not only set Philippine politics' basic ideological fault-line in its highest relief thus far. It has also opened the door to a far larger backdrop: the crisis of Western-led economic globalization now compelling the world to a major turning.

The scale of this turning was first described by the American thinker Francis Fukuyama after the Berlin Wall fell in 1989. "The end of history," he called that final nail in the coffin of the Soviet empire, with half a century of mortal rivalry ending in Western liberal democracy besting communism as the political choice of the future.

The 1990s however proved that to be deceptive sugar-coating on a bitter new global pill. Not only did Western liberal democracy's free-market economic model fail to prevent the anguished collapse of a Soviet-economy under renovation in a torrent of foreign investment and capitalist advice, it also brought a new, more painful lesson on global interconnection, this time in the language of money.

When the Thai baht's collapse triggered the Asian tiger economies' currency crisis in 1997, initial Western spectator smugness soon evaporated in massive capital flight and currency speculation that led to a speedy contagion of crisis from Asia to Russia and Latin America. Falling demand for US and the rest of the industrial world's products next had recession hovering over the bastions of free-market capitalism in a downward tailspin further speeded by the Sept. 11 attack.

Trying to get a grip on this wildly turbulent epoch, every other global pundit and analyst has ritually resurrected the twin meaning of the Chinese ideogram for "crisis" and opportunity." In much the same way that religious debate now grapples with the roots of terrorism in Islamic fundamentalism, basic economic concepts have returned to global debate on the best way out of a royal mess.

In the words of the International Herald Tribune's Reginald Dale in 1999, "As economic globalization buffets people's lives in much the same way that the Industrial Revolution disrupted earlier generations...a much more relevant question is whether we have reached the 'end of economics'—whether free-market principles will dominate economic behavior in the centuries ahead."

"Free-market economics and liberal democracy are in fact two sides of the same coin; both involve giving the average citizen the maximum amount of free choice, or liberty, to use an older word, inside a rules-based system," Dale points out. He does not forget to add that "many critics focus on the market part of market economics and forget the rules part."

What those rules are—and whether they will see the present financial world "order" through a steep impasse suffered most severely by ordinary citizens in a "globalizing" world—is the present focus of debate. To this non-economist, the fascinating part is discovering which of these economic rules are based on universally applicable objective truth—beginning with the law of supply and demand—and which are products of propaganda from the Anglo-Saxon capitalist version or the Marxist vision of history and economics.

From this perspective, the most interesting part of the Code-NGO foray into the capital market has been its unintended challenge to old thought underpinning both Left and Right theory and practice. While the Right, in the person of senatorial personages, fulminates with embarrassing self-righteousness on tax laws routinely dodged and flouted by capitalists, the Left, in the person of earnest debt-condonation activists, argues from basic rejection of the idea of a capitalist-free market itself.

The fact that both Code-NGO and two wings of the original Freedom from Debt Coalition have both worked and marched in defense of grass roots, suffering the brunt of globalization should therefore not mislead the public (business reporters included) into lumping them together into one uniform "NGO community" or more fashionably, "civil society." In much the same way, no one who truly wishes to understand the motives of a capitalist bank for entering and honoring a contract with an NGO client can confine himself to the premises of "beggar-thy-neighbor" capitalism.

The debate is far from over, with every earnest one compelled to reexamine basic concepts in a world groping for new approaches to old problems from one crisis/opportunity to another. Like never before, the cutting edge lies in seeing things whole. Only by perceiving interrelationships between politics and economics, the environment and culture through time—like the 19th century Industrial Revolution that produced Karl Marx and the global economic depression that produced John Maynard Keynes in the 20th—can we gain firmer footing in the crisis of the early 21st century.

On this footing, we can begin to separate chaff—like *trapo* politics and universal fear of the new in both capitalists and leftists—from the grain of authentic creative solutions. Already, RCBC has received the Asian Bankers' Award for its LGU bonds, a social investment innovation like the PEACe bonds. A bank official also notes the number of new foreign investors now offering "clean credit lines," i.e. one-year renewable loans. Looks like we have a new improved mousetrap in our crisis-ridden midst.

Sylvia L. Mayuga is a veteran freelance writer on historical and cultural issues.

Former Senate chiefs should urge Erap to cooperate

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IN A RECENT Channel 13 special hosted by Star columnist Jarius Bondoc, to which this columnist was invited, Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo, who was a guest along with former Senate President Jovito Salonga, gave a very apt metaphor to describe what former President Joseph Estrada is doing now. Marcelo said Estrada can be likened to the captain of a basketball team who realizes halfway through the game that the opponent team is way ahead with 30 points. And to compound the problem, he shoots the ball into the opponent's goal (when he admitted on TV that he was Jose Velarde)! Realizing that the game is lost, he decides to call it quits and demands that they play football instead.

A journalist friend has another metaphor. Estrada, in firing his lawyers and refusing to cooperate with the court, can be likened to a card player in the middle of a high-stakes game, who realizes that the cards are stacked in his opponent's favor. Knowing that he is going to lose, he kicks and turns the card table over, scattering all the cards and bets on the floor while screaming, *"Ayaw ko na! Ayaw ko na!"*

* * *

Right now, many people across the nation are busy forming their own metaphors to best describe what Estrada is trying to do vis-à-vis the justice system. Among those mulling over the situation are three former Senate presidents, namely Edgardo Angara and Blas Ople, who supported Estrada to the bitter end, and Aquilino Pimentel, who deserted Estrada at the sudden end of the Senate impeachment trial, and Speaker Jose de Venecia, Estrada's former arch rival. These four leaders met in order to explore "parliamentary diplomacy" in order to avert what they termed a "gathering crisis," referring to reports that Estrada's supporters are once again recruiting people to rise up against the government if he is not allowed to go abroad for what one opposition leader termed a medical treatment-cum-exile. These congressional leaders obviously are nervous about what Sen. Joker Arroyo called "Erap's tantrums" and the reports of new mass recruitment. They are therefore pressuring the Macapagal administration to let Estrada leave in the name of "reconciliation."

* * *

But as former Senate President Salonga pointed out in the TV special, Estrada's recent arraignment before the Sandiganbayan has changed the whole equation. Now that his case is under the court's jurisdiction, the Palace is powerless to rule on his trip abroad, for that is how our justice system works. Salonga added that if Estrada were to be allowed to go abroad to escape trial in order to appease his followers, it would make the government look "not just like a banana republic, but a camote republic," to borrow MTRCB Chair Alejandro Roces' colorful phrase. This would belie the stability that we strive so hard to project to foreign investors.

To my mind, what the former Senate chiefs, two of whom are lawyers of note, ought to do, if they are really patriotic, is help convince Estrada to cooperate fully with the judicial system so that his trial can be speedily finished, and he will either be set free if the prosecution fails to prove its case, or, if convicted, work for a presidential pardon. I suspect that President Macapagal would like very much to grant him a pardon, so that she will be relieved of the "Erap problem," but this needs first a conviction.

The problem, however, as Marcelo pointed out, is that it seems that Estrada's people want him to be freed without having to go through a trial.

* * *

During the TV show, Salonga sought to defend the judiciary from attacks by Estrada and his lawyers, especially on the issue of his alleged "persecution" by the Sandiganbayan's Special Division that was created by the Supreme Court precisely to try him in a speedy manner. Salonga pointed out that the three justices of the Special Division handpicked by the Supreme Court—Justices Minita Chico-Nazario, the chair, and Edilberto Sandoval and Teresita Leonardo de Castro—do not have a "closeness to the fallen leader," unlike some of their colleagues, and are more than well-qualified to handle his trial. Salonga also stressed that it was no mere whim of the Supreme Court to create this special division, but the express wish of all the Sandiganbayan justices, who passed a resolution asking for the creation of this division after Justice Anacleto Badoy was stricken ill and Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena was suspended by the Supreme Court.

Significantly, Salonga said, the Special Division was created by the Supreme Court en banc upon the recommendation of its Oversight Committee, chaired by Senior Justice Josue Bellosillo and whose other members are all Estrada appointees: Justice Bernardo Pardo (the first Estrada appointee), Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, Arturo Buena and Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez.

* * *

What this says is that these Estrada appointees saw there was everything to be gained in forming a special panel to ensure that their erstwhile benefactor would get a speedy and fair trial. If these high magistrates could see the need for speedy justice, why can't the senior leaders of Congress see this too? In fact, if former Senate Presidents Pimentel, Angara and Ople would only strive to persuade the former president to submit himself to speedy justice in the court, instead of claiming that it is "persecuting" him, they would be doing some restitution for their past sin of having played virtually blind to the excesses of his brief rule.

Women's 'cry'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT began with a poem, "Hibik Namin (Our Cry)," a "versified manifesto" that appeared in the newspaper El Heraldo Filipino on Feb. 17, 1899. The poem, says noted playwright and Ramon Magsaysay awardee Bienvenido Lumbera, called on all Filipinos to heed the plight of women victims of rape by American soldiers.

What made "Hibik Namin" notable was that authorship of the poem was shared by nine women who used obviously allegorical names. This was "in keeping with the practice of Katipunan members who hid their identity behind names bespeaking the virtues or ideals they identified with." Says Lumbera: "We may presume then that the signatories saw themselves as revolutionaries who identified with all the women who suffered rape in the hands of American soldiers during the Philippine-American War."

This is, to use Hollywood terminology, the "back story" of the *zarzuela* "Hibik at Himagsik nina Victoria Lactaw," a production of Dulaang UP which just ended its run at the Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero Theater last weekend.

In his notes, Lumbera says he was intrigued by the poem and the circumstances that led to the nine women's authorship. "Who were the women hiding behind the allegorical signatures? This is where I came (in) as a playwright. I wanted to breathe life into the signatures, and by the narrative I constructed I had hoped to make them real."

Lumbera's resolve to "breathe life" into the women behind the signatures gained added impetus with the launching of the Centennial Literary Contest in 1998. And because the rules of the contest called for the *zarzuela* (or in its Filipinized form "*sarsuwela*") for entries in Filipino, the story of "Victoria Lactaw" ("leap to victory" is the nearest translation I can think of) was told through both dialogue and song. But the format fit the story of the nine women in other ways, notes Lumbera. "This traditional musical play offers opportunities for the fusion of poetry and music in a political drama. The *sarsuwela* as theater form, lightens without trivializing a serious treatment of a weighty theme such as war and nationalism, and makes possible the creation of political songs that can be set apart from the dramatic context in which they were originally set."

* * *

LUMBERA chose to situate the *sarsuwela* in Lipa, Batangas, around the turn of the century. He cites many reasons for this choice of locale. It is in Batangas, he says, that "such expressive indigenous names are still to be found—Dimaano, Dimasupil, Dimagiba, etc."

Second, Lumbera is himself Lipa born and bred. He credits his familiarity with the town's oral history to anecdotes and stories related by two beloved mentors: Jose Alex Katigbak, his high school English teacher, and "that venerable chronicler of the past of Lipa" Gualberto Mayo. "Hibik at Himagsik" thus became this son of Lipa's vehicle for paying tribute to his hometown.

Another motive for writing a musical play set during the Philippine-American War, says Lumbera, was "to remind my generation of Filipinos...that there was a war between the Filipinos and Americans that caused the loss of almost two million Filipino lives." This bloody and undoubtedly traumatic period in our national life, coming close on the heels of the revolution against Spain, has been treated only in passing, almost apologetically, by many historians. Citing two popular history textbooks used in his time, Lumbera says the Philippine-American War is covered in only nine pages in "A Brief History of the Philippines" published in 1919. "History of the Philippines," authored by Conrado Benitez and published in 1926 and revised in 1954, deals with the anti-colonial struggle in only two-and-a-half pages.

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EVEN more significant, Lumbera says that through "Hibik at Himagsik" he wanted to "join my voice to those who have been protesting the silencing of women in the narration of our revolutionary struggle."

Mirroring their secondary status and indeed invisibility in the nation's life, Filipino women have been sidelined and silenced in the telling of our history. Again, going by the accounts of historians of old, it would seem that beyond a few token participants, women played no role at all in the struggle for independence. "The story of Victoria Lactaw and her friends is an amplification of the voices of women who suffered in the Philippine-American War, and at the same time a purposive imagination of the role of women in the conduct of war," says Lumbera.

He adds that his "imagining" of the women revolutionaries of 1899 was helped in large part by his personal contact with women revolutionaries in the anti-dictatorship movement.

* * *

FINALLY, Lumbera senses serendipity in that the staging of the *sarsuwela* he had written years ago should coincide with a new kind of American "occupation."

"'American Occupation' did not end in 1946 but continued under a different guise in our time, and markedly so under the administration of the incumbent President who has reopened our country to American troops after 10 years during which time we thought we had finally been able to assert our national sovereignty by keeping them out of our territory," Lumbera writes.

For Chayong and Bindoy, the two young lovers who are forced to mature way beyond their years by their commitment to and involvement in the war against a new colonizer, the Americans are interlopers who have snatched with malice and deceit the victory Filipinos won against the Spaniards. What do young people think of the Americans in our midst today?

'Costumbres Chinas' (2)

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L.Harper

(FOLLOWING is the continuation of Paz Yuchengo's article, translated from Spanish.)

"When the child celebrates his first year, there is much activity in the house of the paternal grandparents. The celebrations must take place on that very day and the presents for the child should be given at the same time or a few days before but never afterwards. The major part of the presents from parents and friends comprises gold jewelry, money wrapped in red paper, and for the mother, food and wine. Some are given twice: at birth and after a month. The paternal grandparents send many kinds of food to the maternal grandparents and to other relatives, but these are obliged to return the wrappings of the obsequies with at least two dozen eggs and two or four packages of noodles which should be done the same day.

"If the child is the eldest grandson, the grandparents tender a great fiesta. Foreigners are not aware of the importance given the eldest grandson. In a Chinese family he is treated like a son. When the grandfather dies this boy receives the same inheritance as his uncles.

"At four months other celebrations similar to the ones that took place when the child was a month old are repeated. These are practically the same rites although there is a new one: the child must taste the noodles with eggs.

"The last with respect to customs concerning births is the first birthday. This day is the most important in the life of a boy and there may be no other celebration in his honor until he celebrates his 16th. The mother should follow strictly the prescribed customs for her son or else everything bad that happens to the boy will be blamed on her.

"At birth the destiny of the boy is already known. Ordinarily the grandparents or the parents visit a fortune-teller and inform him of the day, the hour and the year of birth. The Chinese believe that bad luck can be avoided, which is why they ask the advice of a good diviner. However, they are seldom interested in the destiny of a girl unless it pertains to her marriage."

Marriage customs

"A foreigner attending a Chinese wedding seldom realizes the many preparations and expenses it entails. The honor of each family is at stake so that it becomes a contest between the two. The most important is to save face so that the head of the family will not hesitate to spend his entire fortune.

"When a son reaches maturity, his parents look for a girl if possible of his age and social status, with the help of a matchmaker (the first thing he does is to ask the day and hour of the girl's birth). Afterwards they visit a fortune-teller who will investigate the fate of the future couple. If their destinies are compatible, the matchmaker begins the negotiations in behalf of the groom. Nowadays many girls find their fiancés without the help of their parents. Despite that, they still need the services of a matchmaker who, after many visits to the two families, helps them to decide the date of the contract.

"From that moment on, the family of the groom begins to spend a lot of money. In rich families the groom almost always brings to the house of the girl, aside from the engagement ring, two dozen pieces of beautiful and expensive material, two bracelets of gold and two sets of jewelry, one of pearls and another of jade or diamonds. These presents are for the bride. Other items like food and sweets of all kinds are for the parents. The richer the family of the groom, the more presents are brought. The sweets represent the tenderness of the union at the same time proclaiming the imminent celebration.

"If the family of the girl is poor, money wrapped in red paper is given: one to buy the many things needed by the bride and the other for the parents as a price for their daughter. From the girl, on the other hand, the groom will only receive perhaps a watch and a piece of material for his suit. The family of the groom has to send to the girl's house the banquet tables so that the girl can invite her parents to the dinner. The ceremonies of that day are quite simple: the groom places the ring on the bride's finger, the bracelets on her arms and the bride does the same with the watch. The matchmaker and the in-laws begin to eat the noodles with eggs that bring good luck to the couple. When the parents of the groom leave the house they turn over to drivers and servants who have helped them bring the presents and food a red package with money. The richer the family, the bigger the tip.

"In the following months the family of the girl is very much occupied preparing and buying the house furnishings and trousseau. Now the father can demonstrate his wealth. The things the parents buy are at times useless. However they produce a good impression on the family of the groom. Among other things, they buy a refrigerator, an electric oven with all the accessories, a piano, a radio, furniture and a sewing machine. In fact, enough things are bought to open a store.

"The presents are given even if the couple will live with the groom's family. The father believes that the more presents he gives, the more prominent it makes him.

"In the meantime, the family of the groom is preparing the banquet salon and other necessary things for the wedding. He undertakes all the expenses: clothes for the bride and her entourage, the church, the feast, etc.

"A few days before the wedding, the bride's parents give a prenuptial party, but the father of the groom pays for it. If the girl is also rich, they will invite as many as 800 guests."

(To be continued)

Called but not chosen

YOUNGBLOOD

Jose

*We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.***

I RARELY cry. I didn't cry even when my Dad passed away. I really can't say why. Maybe it's because of my family's influence or the long years I spent inside the walls of the seminary. Or maybe it's because of the training I got there for eight years. Or it could simply be because men don't cry.

But that time there was no hiding my true emotions. I wept.

You see, I got my girlfriend pregnant. Now, this shouldn't have been a big problem since I was already 25 years old and I already had a college degree. But what made it very complicated was the fact that I was a seminarian.

Yes, I once dreamed of becoming a priest. But one fine day it happened. The dream was shattered and I knew I could never be a priest of God anymore.

Pia, my girlfriend, offered to have an abortion so that I could continue with my priestly studies. After all, I only had two more years to go before my ordination. "What do you think?" she asked me.

I had always dreamed of becoming a priest. When I was young, I used to wear my Mom's skirt and play *misa-misahan*, with me acting out the role of the priest. I would "consecrate" Fita biscuits and then distribute them as communion among my little sisters. After that, they would follow me wherever I went as in a religious procession.

So it didn't surprise anyone in the family when I entered the seminary at the young age of 12. I kept telling my *makulit* sisters that I decided to enter the seminary as soon as I had hair growing all over my body so as not to leave many girls broken-hearted.

But all of my life, I thought the priestly life was the only one in which I would be happy. Once I was asked by a friend who knew that I had a girlfriend, if I would be happy being married. I told him no, because there was no other life I could think of other than being a priest.

So I was greatly overwhelmed by the sudden change of fortune. I can't describe the emotions that swept over me when I learned that Pia was pregnant. It was extremely unfortunate, and I knew my actions would have serious consequences.

Everyone in our sleepy town knew about it. They were all talking about it! It was like a soap opera. But unlike a *telenovela*, there were real people and true emotions involved here. I had been caught with my pants down (no pun intended), and I was unprepared for this.

Suddenly, life seemed so empty. The various philosophies and isms I learned in the seminary no longer made sense. The "abstracts" lost their meaning. Many people despised me for what I had done and I felt so alone.

Rather ironically, I prayed like I had never prayed before. My prayers became real. They were suddenly touched with reality. And God came alive.

When I was still in the seminary, we had communal prayers at least three times a day. After a few years, praying became mechanical. But this time, praying made sense. I experienced some kind of enlightenment. And I felt joyful!

Truly many are called but few are chosen. I was called (I hope so!) but I was not chosen. "It is not you who chose Me but I chose you." No matter how much I wanted to be a priest, it was not I who would ultimately decide whether I would become one. God decided and said I couldn't be one.

I realized that in the end, it is not I who was important, but God. He alone mattered. Priesthood is not a right. It is a gift. No one has a claim to it. It is freely given. What matters is the will of God, not the choices of men.

I married Pia and we now have a son, not because I was forced into it or I was left with no other option. I did it because I loved her.

Life is mysterious and God has His own ways. I believe I finally found what God wanted for me.

Why did I weep? I wept because the dream was over. I could not be a priest.

But after that dream, I have found a new life and a new goal. I am a companion to my wife and a father to my son. My seminary classmates were saddened, my formators were shocked, my parents were frustrated and I wept, for the dream has ended. Now, I am awake and life has begun.

Someday, I know, my son will become a priest. Not that I am desperate but because God works in mysterious ways.

A Filipino in America

Karissa Anne Descargar Yson

EVERYTHING I do here in America represents my people and my country somehow.

My parents always want to keep me practical and level-headed, to the point where they don't even want to fully Americanize my ways. They believe in making me and my brother follow Filipino tradition without letting it interfere with our social life. Thus I am active in Filipino clubs and activities. I also help the less unfortunate in the Philippines together with my parents who started a learning center in Zambales that seeks to give the young ones a strong foundation of basic knowledge.

In the future, I see my life taking a positive direction only if I keep my head up high and resist any negative influences that come my way. I plan to take every opportunity to embark upon new and exciting journeys. And I will face challenges boldly.

The true values of being Filipino and our family tradition will always be part of my lifestyle and I intend to pass them on to my children and my children's children. I want my kids to be grateful to the Lord for everything they have and to enjoy them and share them with those who have nothing. The tradition of helping the family and sticking together is something we will preserve.

"It is indeed a desirable thing to be well-descended, but the glory belongs to our ancestors," said Plutarch.

We are like the reflections of our ancestors in the 21st century. If not for their persistence and sacrifices, we wouldn't be as strong as we are now.

Both of my grandparents came from humble beginnings. They worked hard to provide my Mom and Dad with the necessities of life. From the stories that I heard from my Dad, it would seem as if life was easy. But the fact is that they had to strive hard to get to where they are. It took a lot of patience and determination for them to get there.

My Mom didn't have an easier time. But practicing the values she learned form her parents, she became very successful. It was from her that I learned to be down-to-earth and to appreciate everything I have.

My Mom and Dad are the two key elements that hold my life together. They have tried to mold their children after their own image. And when my time comes, I intend to do the same.

As a Filipino-American I have been taught to love the family, keep my devotion to the Lord, preserve tradition and be proud of our native land. These are the values that help us attain our great dreams and make a mark here in America.

Karissa Anne Descargar Yson, 16, is a student of the Bishop Alemany High School in California. This piece won second prize in the Annual Essay Contest for Juniors and Seniors sponsored by the Philippine-American Arts Council.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Reckless condemnation of RP justice system

THE PHILIPPINE Bar Association (PBA) strongly condemns the statements of former President Joseph Estrada assailing the integrity of our justice system.

The justice system is the bedrock of all civilized societies, even preceding the establishment of representative democracy. The justice system is one of humanity's greatest achievements. It has evolved over hundreds of years and has transcended the whims and wishes of individuals, to establish a system of fairness for every citizen. To question the impartiality and fairness of this system, without basis, is to question our very way of life.

At the heart of the justice system is the basic concept that no matter how economically or politically powerful an accused may be, he is and should be treated in the same way as the poorest and weakest member of society.

In terminating the services of his lawyers and claiming that he will not get justice from our courts, Estrada is trampling upon our justice system.

Lawyers are officers of the judiciary, and every barrister is bound by oath to protect and preserve the integrity of the justice system. As officers of the court, Estrada's lawyers are duty-bound to advise him in the strongest possible terms to apologize for his baseless denunciation of our justice system.

Our justice system fully provides means for seeking redress against a court or a magistrate whom an accused believes to be unfair. Estrada has not shown the basis of his complaint. Neither has he even started to exhaust those means of redress. He has instead chosen to publicly condemn in a sweeping manner our justice system.

Our justice system has hurdled many challenges against it. As the administrator of our justice system, the Supreme Court has continued to be the most respected institution in our nation. There is no question that Filipinos continue to have the utmost respect for our justice system and our Supreme Court. Estrada should do no less.

Estrada's unfounded sentiments and sweeping condemnation of our justice system cannot and will not stand. As a former president who vowed under oath to preserve and defend the Constitution, Estrada must continue submitting himself to our courts up to final judgment of the cases, no different from the obligations of all members of our society. The rule of law must prevail. The integrity of our justice system must be upheld and protected at all cost.

Estrada has to apologize for his reckless condemnation of our justice system; and so must his lawyers for tolerating and justifying the same.

—FEDERICO Y. ALIKPALA JR. president, Philippine Bar Association

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Bonifacio monument not on NHI list

THE CURRENT spat between Caloocan City Mayor Rey Malonzo and the National Historical Institute (NHI) regarding the fate of the Andres Bonifacio monument could have been avoided if those who drew up the plans for Metro Manila's rail transit system considered history as "the witness of the times, the torch of truth, the life of memory, the teacher of life and the messenger of antiquity," as Cicero taught.

The bone of contention is the planned connection between the Light Rail Transit and Metro Rail Transit lines, which will run through the area where the famous statue stands. What complicates the problem is the fact that the embattled shrine, as Mayor Malonzo correctly points out, is not even on the NHI's official list of shrines and monuments protected under Presidential Decree 2305, prohibiting the alteration and/or transfer of historical landmarks.

It may take sometime before the issue is resolved. Meanwhile, Caloocan's hizzoner will just have to bear whatever pains may develop due to this historical oversight. As for Bonifacio, even heroes have to give in to progress.

—ERICK SAN JUAN, Suite 1402, 1st e-Bank Tower, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City

Code-NGO execs go on indefinite leave

THE PAST weeks have been a challenging period for us. We have attempted to clarify the issues behind the PEACe bonds in many fora, including hearings in both legislative chambers.

We believe we succeeded in clarifying matters to many who have given us the opportunity to explain. Many now understand that there was nothing irregular in the entire process, and that the government was not prejudiced in any way. What makes this continuing task of communicating what we have done easier is that we speak the truth.

However our time, attention and energy have been totally consumed by this effort, and we expect this to continue in the weeks ahead. This has not allowed us to do justice to the roles we play in both Code-NGO and The Peace Foundation, the foundation tasked with administering the proceeds of the bond transaction.

After much introspection and prayer, we have both agreed to request for indefinite leaves of absence from both organizations. We are fortunate that this request has been granted by the boards of directors of both organizations.

We do this so these two organizations can resume normal operations while we continue to explain issues to all who care to listen. It is important that both Code-NGO and The Peace Foundation continue and intensify all programs and projects for the poor and disadvantaged. Our commitment to the poor cannot be hindered by the personal circumstances of anyone. We also believe that those who will take our place will do justice to the tasks at hand. The continuing development of new generations of idealistic and competent NGO workers is a credo we have upheld. This decision will also hopefully allay the unfounded fears of some quarters that we may influence the use of the funds generated for purposes other than poverty alleviation.

We thank all those who have listened and supported us: many political leaders, members of media, the academe, the business community and the public who have taken an interest in the issues. We also thank those who have been critical for we have learned much from them, too.

We thank our colleagues in Code-NGO, The Peace Foundation and civil society. They have kept faith with us and allowed us to serve and stand by their side in many just causes and projects for the poor through the years.

Above all, we thank the poor and disadvantaged. We are better people because they have allowed us to serve them. Our commitment to them remains unwavering.

The opportunity to serve is truly its own reward.

—DANILO SONGCO, MARISSA CAMACHO-REYES, Caucus of Development NGO Networks (Code-NGO), 2/F CCS Bldg., Social Development Complex, Ateneo de Manila University Campus, Loyola Heights, Quezon City

The issues, not the persons

IN HIS column "There's the Rub," Conrado de Quiros frequently attacks not just the issues he is writing about, but the person as well. I list below at least three such instances:

1. Some time last year, he called "fruitcakes" the women demonstrating against the showing of a lewd movie (this was the controversial "Live Show"). In fact, I wrote him asking that he refrain from calling people names and defaming them.

2. In his column about gun control some time late last year, he described the vice president of the Gun Club of the Philippines as someone with gunpowder for brains. De Quiros in this column named this person as the president of the association. In fact, this person (unfortunately, I forget his name) wrote the INQUIRER, and his letter was printed, wherein he stated that De Quiros should apologize to the real president of the association for his mistake. The person being attacked also rebutted De Quiros' points one by one, including that about his having gunpowder for brains. He called unfair the fact that De Quiros had a column and thus a forum for airing his views. He then invited De Quiros to a session where they could talk matters out, focusing on the issues.

3. In his Feb. 7, 2002 column, De Quiros again attacked his subject, Jaime B. Naval, an assistant professor of Political Science at the University of the Philippines, by asking "where Naval got his degree to teach political science, and at UP too." Naval's letter of rebuttal was printed by the INQUIRER last Feb. 19, wherein he mentioned that De Quiros misinterpreted him.

Please ask De Quiros to have basic manners and ethics, not to mention Christian charity. Please tell him to tackle issues, not attack the persons. Obviously, his intention is to be controversial and get readers to notice him, but this should never be done at the expense of the good name of people. My mother always taught me Christian charity, saying that even prostitutes deserve a good name.

In addition, please ask him to do more thorough and accurate research. Mistakes such as identifying the vice president of the Gun Club as its president, or, as Naval mentioned, liberally misinterpreting him, are evidence of journalistic sloppiness—again at the expense of others.

—CAROL ANNE TANSINGCO, Lot 2, Blk. 13, Seville St., BF Garden Homes Rio, Las Piñas City

Pershing's bloody rampage in Mindanao

AFP-REUTERS' story on Gen. John Pershing (PDI, 2/21/02) should have been titled, "Mankins on Pershing" inasmuch as it was mostly about the former and had very little to say about how Pershing "haunts" the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan.

I have nothing against the Mankins. In fact, Bob, the youngest, was one of my closest friends and, Betty, the eldest of the three, was among my favorite dancing partners at parties in Zamboanga. But the wire story was very much flawed and the resource persons who lectured the American soldiers taking part in Balikatan 02-1 treated them to a fancied erudition.

Pershing arrived in Zamboanga serving as the assistant adjutant general under Gen. William Kobbe in 1900. When Maj. Gen. Leonard Wood took over command to organize the Moro Province, a politico-military government, Gen. James Buchanan was ordered to organize the Department of Mindanao and posted in Lanao.

The relationship between Wood and Pershing had been marked by enmity since the Cuban War. Wood who was at the head of the US forces openly showed his contempt for Pershing's method in attaining objectives at a high cost of lives to the rank and file. On learning that Wood was coming, Pershing went with Buchanan to Lanao.

Under Kobbe, Pershing went to Margosatubig and dealt remorselessly with non-Christians. Their leader, Datu Mustapha, survived and openly complained that the Americans, though new in the area, had already killed so many people.

Pershing next descended on Samal Island and killed all the quarreling Manobos on that island! The officers in Davao and Zamboanga strongly felt that his action was highly unnecessary.

In Lanao, Pershing smashed one *cotta* (native fortification) after the other in one year. The surviving warlords trooped to his command post carrying a white flag and gave him the title of "White Godfather."

From Lanao, Pershing became the military aide of the US ambassador to Tokyo. He became the official US observer of the Russo-Japanese war. Then he went back to the United States and got married.

Senator Warren, his father-in-law, rocked the Upper Chamber by demanding the promotion of Pershing from captain to brigadier general.

Pershing returned to Zamboanga as the third and last governor of the Moro Province. Hardly warming his seat, he went to Jolo to assault Bud (Mount) Dahu, where Ujaji led 3,000 warriors, dependents and the aged, to the mountain. The governor-general accompanied by Sulu Gov. Paul Dewitt Rogers, unexpectedly showed up at the site and stopped him. The US election was too close and it was feared that the Republicans would be further pilloried by their opponents should Pershing pursue his blood-thirsty venture.

Pershing grudgingly relented but not before strapping the entire base of the rocky knoll with barbwire to prevent those atop from escaping. After the elections, he returned to the site and was mad to find that the natives had slipped into the valley via the natural cave system there.

In a long-term preparation for his swan song, he did a Machiavelli by being cozy with the Ma'imbung royalty and cruel to the Patikul side. For the same offense, the former got away lightly and Patikul would be severely punished. Among his gratuitous gift or concessions to the Ma'imbung royalty were a palace and a mosque in town, a royal visit for Sultan Jamalul Kiram to the United States and an audience with the US president, and sending Princess Tarhata Kiram to a fine school in the United States.

On June 13, 1913 a major battle pitted the Americans against the noble families of Patikul who massed 5,000 warriors, unarmed men, women, children and the aged atop Mount Langkuasan (Bagsak to the Americans), a rocky knoll 25 kilometers east of Jolo. To ensure his "glory," Pershing imposed a news blackout. The newsmen arriving in town were sent out and the insistent ones were locked up. Only the Mindanao Herald came out with the screaming headline, "Battle at Bud Bagsak fiercest since American occupation!"

Curiously the paper hit the streets while Pershing's troops were still clambering up the knoll. The Herald reported that the soldiers "(clung) to shrubs and vines to reach the top" and identified one of the fatalities as Capt. Nichols Taylor. All of these were drawn from mere imagination.

When Sgt. John McLeod, of the quartermaster staff, retired, he opened a can of worms when he reported that 340 Americans had been killed along with 2,000 native defenders. Dayang-dayang (princess) Inda'Tass, who was still a child, Datu Tahil and Datu Tambuyong, who were among the five datu warlords at Mount Bagsak and survived, said 3,000 were killed.

Previous to the assault, intense fighting had broken out in the valleys and plains, and its base. That's how a creek, Sapa Bunuan, (Battle Creek) got its name.

It was Pershing's series of indiscriminate carnage that brought the US concept of democracy to Moroland.

—RONY BAUTISTA, Ph.D., Busay, Isabela, Basilan

Taliban routed but Bin Laden remains elusive

KABUL—Six months after the Sept. 11 attacks, the United States has toppled Afghanistan's Taliban regime and is pounding the remnants of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network, but the trail of the terror suspect may have gone cold.

US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld has insisted the US-led campaign in Afghanistan was against al-Qaida and the Taliban and not a single-minded pursuit of Bin Laden, the alleged architect of the suicide attacks on New York and Washington. But any victory in the "war on terror" in Afghanistan will seem hollow while the alleged terror mastermind remains at large.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Said Mohammad Azam

Five months after the United States started its bombing campaign against the Taliban regime which for years harbored Bin Laden, just a few hundred diehard fighters are holding out against a massive US-led ground and air assault in the mountains of eastern Afghanistan.

When US B-52 heavy bombers began the Afghan campaign on Oct. 7, Taliban leaders were defiant, refusing to hand over their "guest" and warning US troops would meet the same bloody fate as their invading Russian and British predecessors. Western analysts also warned that invading foreign troops would be in for a hard fight against battle-hardened Afghans who had lived through more than two decades of continual conflict in their rugged country.

However, while Taliban troops were up to the low-level conflict waged for years against their Northern Alliance opponents, they proved no match for the sophisticated and deadly effective weaponry Washington rained down on them. Pounded relentlessly by an enemy their anti-aircraft guns were impotent against and attacked on the ground by reinvigorated Northern Alliance forces, the Taliban promises that their enemies would meet a bloody end faded with the smoke of battle.

On Nov. 13 opposition forces entered Kabul as the routed Taliban fled and the hunt for Bin Laden restarted in earnest. The US State Department offered a $25-million reward for the capture of Bin Laden, whom President George W. Bush famously said was wanted "dead or alive."

Saudi-born Bin Laden was already wanted for the Aug. 7, 1998 bombings of the American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania which left more than 200 dead.

But despite the price on his head and a massive hi-tech manhunt which employed spy satellites and surveillance drones, the millionaire-turned-Islamic militant has eluded capture.

Several of Bin Laden's top lieutenants and more than 1,000 suspected al-Qaida members have been rounded up in an international manhunt, but their leader's trail has gone cold.

He was last confirmed alive on Oct. 21 in an interview taped by the Qatar-based al-Jazeera television network in which a gaunt and sick-looking Bin Laden vowed to pursue his battle with the United States to the death.

After the rout of his Taliban hosts in November, the al-Qaida leader was believed to have fled to a massive cave complex in the eastern Tora Bora mountains bordering Pakistan, ironically built with US money for mujahedin fighters battling invading Soviets from 1979-89. Weeks of heavy bombing of the mountains followed by ground operations by Afghan allies and US special forces failed to find any trace of Bin Laden.

Over the following months the 45-year-old extremist has been variously reported killed in the war or dead of kidney failure, or alive in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Indian-administered Kashmir, Iran or Yemen—but all without confirmation.

Hopes he had been found were raised last month when a missile strike near Zhawar Kili in eastern Afghanistan killed three suspected al-Qaida fighters, one of them much taller than the others.

US officials believe the six-foot four-inch Bin Laden could have been one of the three men killed in the missile strike by a CIA Predator drone on Feb. 4. Pieces of flesh and bones were collected from the site of the Hellfire missile strike by US troops and flown back to the United States for DNA analysis to determine whether one of them was indeed Bin Laden.

Local Afghans however maintain the men were scrap metal dealers, not al-Qaida or Taliban.

At present US officials are seeking DNA samples from Bin Laden's family in Saudi Arabia to determine whether Bin Laden was killed.

Until then, Army Gen. Tommy Franks, the commander of US forces in Afghanistan, says he is operating on the assumption that Bin Laden is still alive. ***AFP***

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

1,000 Afghan fighters join assault

GARDEZ, Afghanistan—Some 1,000 heavily armed Afghan reinforcements equipped with tanks and rocket launchers have poured into eastern Afghanistan to reinforce the bloody US-led offensive against al-Qaida and Taliban fighters holed up in the Arma mountains.

Afghan armored vehicles, including six tanks, were seen heading late Thursday to the front lines in Paktia province, where the US-led coalition has been relentlessly bombarding the die-hard fighters.

"One thousand men under the command of (General) Gul Haider has been sent to Paktia today to take part in the fighting against al-Qaida and other terrorists," said Gulbuddin, an aide to Defense Minister Mohammad Qasim Fahim.

Coming bad weather could impede air operations but was not expected to slow the progress of ground troops, said US Army Major Tim Brooks, an operations officer with the coalition task force, as clouds threatening snow gathered over the battlefield.

"We're better at fighting in all conditions than any other army in the world," he said.

B-52s and other warplanes have kept up round-the-clock strikes against al-Qaida positions in the rugged Arma mountains, which Afghan interim leader Hamid Karzai called "the last isolated base of terrorists" in the country.

The US-led forces killed more than 100 suspected al-Qaida fighters in the ground and air attacks Wednesday, a US military spokesperson said at Bagram air base.

Operation commander Maj. Gen. Frank Hagenbeck had said Wednesday afternoon at least half of the 600 to 700 al-Qaida fighters thought to be holed up had been killed.

US Army Major Bryan Hilferty said US commanders now estimate they may have faced more than 1,000 al-Qaida as militants continued to infiltrate the area.

"They are continuing to try to bring in people," he said.

AN AFGHAN soldier displays his rocket launcher as he waits with others to take part in the fighting against al-Qaida and Taliban fighters in Gardez. AP

The freshly resupplied US, Afghan and allied forces continued to push south from the village of Sirkankel, 15 km south of Gardez, into one of the militant group's last remaining strongholds in Afghanistan, said Hilferty.

Food, water, fuel, ammunition and equipment to build bunkers came in by helicopter late Wednesday, the military spokesperson said.

He said the coalition forces had taken prisoner some al-Qaida fighters, but he did not know how many.

Army General Tommy Franks, commander of the US military campaign in Afghanistan, acknowledged the high risks faced in Operation Anaconda, named after the snake that encircles and crushes its prey.

"I think the days ahead are going to continue to be dangerous days for our forces that are committed to this effort," Franks said in Washington. "But the alternative to taking such risk is not acceptable in my view."

Eight US servicemen have been killed and 48 wounded in fierce fighting in the operation, which is the deadliest battle for US forces since the military campaign began on Oct. 7 to rid Afghanistan of the extremist Taliban regime and the al-Qaida network of Osama bin Laden. *AFP*

Trench-level view of attack on al-Qaida base

By Jonathan Ewing

SIRKANKEL, Afghanistan—It had been a freezing night in a dry riverbed, and just after dawn, the shells from Taliban and al-Qaida guns started whistling in.

The barrage lasted for up to five hours, with varying intensity. A soldier who had taken shrapnel in the legs and buttocks howled in pain, but could not be evacuated in safety until nightfall.

Cold, chaos and the whine and thump of shells, incoming and outgoing. More than six months after terrorists destroyed the World Trade Center, the war in Afghanistan was still in full swing.

Young American infantry officers marched their men up the back ramps of C-130 cargo planes. Australian special forces, who had refused to acknowledge their presence in Kandahar, drove up to their airfield in Land Rovers armed with heavy machine guns.

My own departure for the front seemed to become imminent around Feb. 24 when I was told to prepare for extremely cold weather and was given pills for altitude sickness.

Finally on Saturday came word that we would be helicoptered into an area outside Sirkankel that night. For most of the afternoon we waited on the airstrip.

After several false starts, word came after nightfall to board the CH-47 Chinook that would ferry us to our destination. The propellers of the giant transport helicopter were already raging as we lined up in two rows.

When all the troops were on board, the machine finally took off, again in blackout conditions. Sitting next to the two side gunners, the only light I could see was the green reflection on their faces from their night-vision glasses.

Five minutes to go, the door gunner signaled, holding up his hand as we approached the landing zone. It had gone much faster than I expected, but at least the Chinook hadn't attracted any fire.

The soldiers disembarked and lay down, forming a circular perimeter. The helicopter took off, its roar faded away, and all 43 of us were left in dark and silence on the side of a barren hill.

Slowly the officers and their radio men began to scurry about, orienting themselves on maps and contacting other units to link up with before leading the march to our night position.

My feet were numb from the cold, and we moved slowly. We set up our perimeter in a dry riverbed—a good, defensible position.

The night passed in brief naps a few minutes at a time.

Just before dawn, the commander walked down the line of sleeping soldiers to shake them awake and tell them to pack up their sleeping bags, most of which were wet—inside and out—from the early morning frost.

The soldiers were waiting for first light when the shells came in.

Rounds crashed and exploded, some as near as 15 meters away. As I lay on the riverbed, patches of earth flew through the air and soldiers ran by. A round came in, thudded into the ground a few feet away from me, ticked for a while but didn't go off.

A colleague whom I lay spooned into for safety asked what that sound was.

"Those are my knees knocking together," I told him.

None of the men I had arrived with were injured, but a soldier from a different company had a hellish time until the medics loaded him up with painkillers. *AP*

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Board of Foreign Service Examinations (BFSE) of the Department of Foreign Affairs announces the holding of the –

2002 FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER (FSO) EXAMINATIONS

to recruit candidates for appointment to the position of Foreign Service Officer Class IV (FSO IV).

The FSO examinations consist of three (3) parts which will be held on the following dates:

Qualifying Test : 5 May 2002
Written Examinations : 3, 4 and 5 July 2002
Oral Examinations : To be determined at a later date.

IMPORTANT:

(1) Application forms and relevant information regarding the examinations may be obtained personally or requested through mail from the following offices of the Department of Foreign Affairs:

The Board Secretariat
12/Fl., DFA Building
2330 Roxas Blvd.
Pasay City
Tel. Nos. 834-3083/
3080/
4925/
4923

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Causing-Lozada Bldg.
Osmena Blvd., corner
Lapu-lapu St.
Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032)
256-3193
253-6798
256-0624

DFA Regional
Consular Office
5/Fl., City Hall Bldg.
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. Nos. (08822)
724-309
857-2175

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Yulo Street
Iloilo City
Tel. Nos. (033)
336-1737
337-8017

DFA –Mindanao
Doors 1 & 2, Tourism Complex
Magsaysay Park 8000
Davao City
Tel Nos. (802)
227-3900
227-0712
227-0713

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Upper Calarian,
Southcom Bldg.
Zamboanga City
Tel. Nos. (062)
991-4398
991-7958

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Transfield Bldg.
Pagdalagan Norte
San Fernando, La Union
Tel. Nos. (072)
888-3733
888-5484

DFA Regional
Consular Office
3/Fl., City Hall Bldg.
Legaspi City
Tel. Nos. (052)
480-1773
245-5056

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Municipal Building
Tuguegarao, Cagayan Valley
Tel. No. (078)
846-2310

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Manpower Training Center
Better Living Subdivision,
Isabang, Lucena City
Tel. Nos. (042)
710-4526
373-1898

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Paskuhan Village
San Fernando, Pampanga
Tel. Nos. (045)
963-1879
961-6638

(2) Application forms may also be obtained from the Regional Offices of the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

(3) Application forms may also be downloaded from the Department of Foreign Affairs' website: www.dfa.gov.ph and the Civil Service Commission's website: www.csc.gov.ph .

Completed application forms together with the documentary requirements must be returned by the applicants themselves or by postal service to any of the DFA offices enumerated above not later than 5 April 2002 for evaluation and processing.

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Pakistan eyes amnesty for Islamic militants

ISLAMABAD—Pakistan will grant amnesty to possibly hundreds of detained members of banned radical and militant Islamic groups, provided they first sign a written pledge to have no further contact with their groups, official media reported.

Pakistan rounded up more than 2,000 Islamic radicals in January following the banning by military ruler Gen. Pervez Musharraf of five hardline groups, including two blamed by arch rival India for a bloody December attack on its parliament.

"The government will not take any further action against those activists of the banned groups who were arrested but had no criminal charges . . . registered against them," APP quoted Interior Minister Moinuddin Haider as saying on a radio show late on Thursday.

Haider added authorities in Pakistan's four provinces were preparing lists of those who could be released on a written undertaking that they would sever links with their banned parties or groups.

Pakistan has long been grappling with sectarian violence between now-banned hardline groups from the rival Sunni and Shi'ite sects of Islam, and been under fire from India for policies seen to support militant Islamic groups fighting New Delhi's rule in disputed Kashmir.

The attack on the Indian parliament sparked the mobilization of up to a million troops along the nuclear-armed neighbors' border, raising fears of full-scale war.

Haider said the crackdown against sectarian groups would continue, while other suspected militants who avoided January's dragnet were still being hunted.

Around 600 people from sectarian groups accused of murder were awaiting trial and hearings would begin once a new system of anti-terrorist courts was in place.

"We are fully determined to stamp out this menace," Haider said.

Haider said earlier this week that a rash of sectarian attacks showed banned radical and militant Islamic groups had failed to heed government warnings and would face stern action. ***Reuters***

Company plans to produce human embryos

MELBOURNE—An Australian company said Friday it plans to begin producing cloned human embryos later this year for use in medical research.

Stem Cell Sciences has rights to the cloning technique used by Scottish scientists to create Dolly the sheep in 1997, said executive director Peter Mountford.

"Our objective is to therapeutically clone diseased embryos," said Mountford.

The patented cloning technique involves inserting human cells into animal eggs or leftover human eggs from in vitro fertilization clinics.

The egg's original genes are then removed and the cloned embryo allowed to develop.

Mountford said the planned research would use cells donated by people suffering genetic diseases to create cloned embryos with diseased cell lines.

"It would allow us to screen millions of drugs against these diseased cells," he said.

Mountford said his company would not consider allowing an embryo to develop into a cloned person.

"I think it would be an outrageous thing to do," said Mountford.

The planned research will likely take place in Australia or Britain, depending on moves by Australian authorities to regulate therapeutic cloning.

The Australian government is in the process of formulating nationwide laws dealing with therapeutic human cloning and stem cell research. A parliamentary committee has recommended a moratorium on therapeutic cloning.

In Britain, the government allows strictly regulated therapeutic human cloning. ***AP***

Iraq-UN talks on arms inspectors end upbeat

UNITED NATIONS—The first high-level talks between the United Nations and Iraq in a year ended on a positive note on Thursday with both sides agreeing to meet next month. But there was no decision on whether Baghdad would allow UN arms inspectors to return.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan called the one-day meeting "frank and useful" while Iraqi Foreign Minister Naji Sabri said it was "positive and constructive." A new meeting with a "well-defined agenda agreed in advance" will be set for mid-April, a UN statement said.

Last February a meeting between Annan and Iraqi Foreign Minister Mohammed al-Sahaf ended poorly with Annan the recipient of a long lecture. The secretary general decided against a follow-up meeting at that time but on Thursday appeared comfortable with Sabri's style, diplomats said.

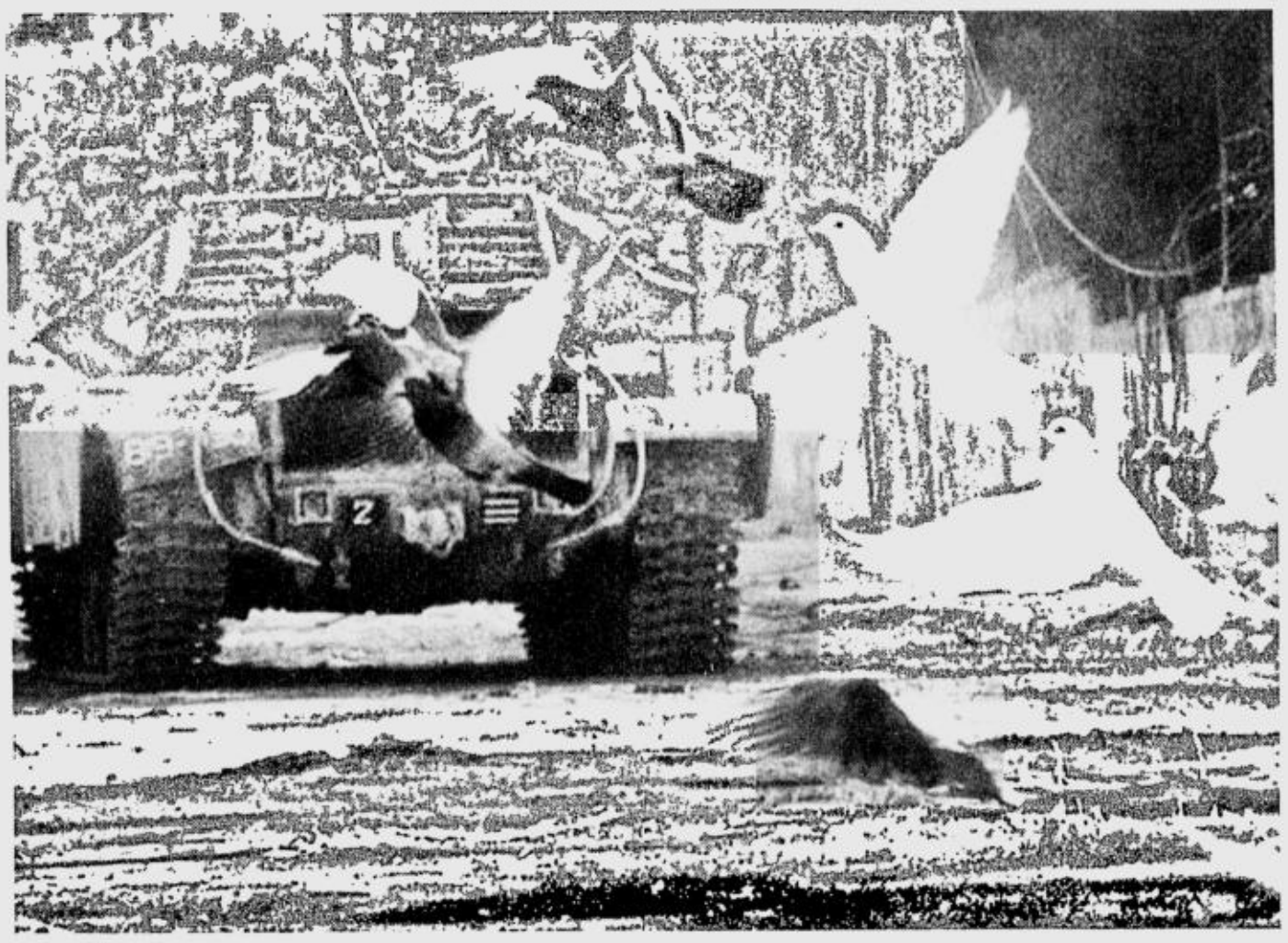
The weapons inspectors, trying to assess if Iraq has weapons of mass destruction, left the country on the eve of a US-British bombing campaign in mid-December 1998 to force Baghdad into cooperating with the arms experts.

The talks were held amid heightened tensions since US President George W. Bush made Iraq the key element of his "axis of evil" reference in his State of the Union speech in January. He demanded Baghdad accept the inspectors or face the consequences.

"It was clear that the Iraqis did not come ready to comply with UN resolutions," a US official said. "That is our only expectation from Iraq." However, British Ambassador Sir Jeremy Greenstock said the continuation of the talks was a hopeful sign but that Iraq could be stalling for time because of the American threat. But he said it was too early to draw conclusions.

"It's much too early to make a judgment about whether this is for real—whether they are truly seeing what the route to full compliance will be or whether they are just trying to start a process because having a process gives them more protection than not having a process," Greenstock said.

But he said the fact that "there seems to be a willingness to come back in mid-April indicates Iraq wants the process to continue. That could be good news." ***Reuters***



DOVES and pigeons fly in front of an Israeli tank entering the West Bank city of Tulkarm, March 7. Israeli troops backed by tanks and aircraft fought their way into two Palestinian refugee camps defying US pressure to end an offensive that has increased fears of all-out war. REUTERS

Israel invades Bethlehem

BETHLEHEM, West Bank—Israeli tanks and troops, covered by attack helicopters, rolled into biblical Bethlehem early Friday, firing at refugee camps and advancing into the town from two directions, witnesses said.

Four Palestinians were killed and 20 wounded, doctors said. One died when Israeli helicopters fired on the Deheishe refugee camp, and the others were killed during an Israeli incursion into the Aida camp.

Two Israeli tanks moved into neighboring Beit Jalla, where Palestinian gunmen have been firing at a Jewish neighborhood across a valley. The neighborhood, called Gilo, was built in a disputed part of Jerusalem claimed by both sides.

The Israeli incursion into Bethlehem followed three days of air strikes against the Palestinian Authority headquarters complex, where Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat has an office. Late Thursday, an Israeli F-16 warplane fired a missile at the compound, hitting a building already gutted by previous strikes. Arafat has been confined to his headquarters in Ramallah, 20 km away, for three months by Israeli forces.

The Israeli military said the air strike was part of the military's "efforts to prevent terrorism." Palestinians said there were some casualties, but the wounded could not be removed to hospitals because of the gunfire.

After midnight, Israeli helicopters fired machine guns from the air at Palestinian houses in the Aida refugee camp at the edge of Bethlehem, after gunmen there fired at an Israeli military outpost nearby, Palestinians said. Israeli forces took control of several buildings at the entrance to the camp, they said.

Then tanks and troops moved into the town from two sides, while other forces gathered at staging areas in two other locations.

In the first hours of the incursion, the Israeli troops did not approach Manger Square or the Church of the Nativity, built on the traditional site of the birthplace of Jesus.

The military move followed a suicide bomb attack Saturday night in Jerusalem that killed 10 Israelis, carried out by a Palestinian from the Deheishe refugee camp at the southern edge of Bethlehem. ***AP***

Zinni, Cheney ordered to help quell violence

WASHINGTON—Under fire for not doing enough to forge Middle East peace, President George W. Bush on Thursday ordered US envoy Anthony Zinni back to the region and said Vice President Dick Cheney would also seek to quell violence there during an upcoming visit.

"There are no assurances" that such missions will break the cycle of escalating clashes between Israelis and Palestinians, said the president, "but that is not going to prevent our government from trying."

Bush's stark policy reversal, hours after US officials insisted Zinni would only return after the parties had lowered the level of violence, came during a joint Rose Garden appearance with Cheney and Secretary of State Colin Powell.

"Peace and stability will be an important topic of the vice president's upcoming trip to the region," Bush said of a visit to open Sunday that will take Cheney to Britain, Turkey, and eight Middle Eastern Arab nations.

Previously, Cheney aides had firmly downplayed that purpose, insisting his foremost focus would be the US-led war on terrorism declared after the Sept. 11 terror strikes on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

"The combination of General Zinni's trip and the vice president's trip may have a positive impact," said Bush, who has been under pressure from Arab leaders to do more to bring peace to the region.

Bush said Zinni's mission would focus on reviving CIA director George Tenet's plan for reaching a ceasefire with an eye on enacting a blueprint crafted by former US senator George Mitchell that calls for confidence-building steps ahead of resuming peace talks.

"The United States will do all it can to help the government of Israel and the Palestinian Authority restore hope to their people and to the region," said Bush, who also praised a Saudi peace proposal earning cautious support internationally and in the region.

Those ideas "have created an opening for discussing this broader peace and for the normalization of relations between Arab states and Israel. The United States is committed to exploring this opening," said the US president. ***AFP***

Family fights auction of Malcolm X writings

LOS ANGELES—Even in death, the fiery words of Malcolm X are causing controversy. This time over who owns them.

Butterfields auction house, which is owned by online auction company eBay Inc., on Thursday put on display the largest collection of personal writings by the famed black militant ever offered while his family vowed to go to court to prevent the sale.

The hand-written journals and personal writings are set to be sold at auction in San Francisco on March 20 unless the six daughters of the assassinated black leader can win a court injunction.

The materials are being sold by an anonymous owner who bought them from a storage locker facility in Florida. How the materials got there and who owned them originally are not known. The letters and journals date from the mid-1940s through 1964, less than a year before he was assassinated on Feb. 21, 1965 at age 39 after breaking with the Nation of Islam and founding his own group.

Butterfields' director of manuscripts Catherine Williamson said the materials, which also contain speeches and drafts of speeches, will be simultaneously auctioned on the internet.

The materials, which are estimated to fetch between $300,000 and $500,000, include letters, diaries, handwritten drafts of speeches at universities such as Yale and Howard, photographs and Malcolm's personal Koran. He converted to Islam while in prison in the 1940s.

The papers document his changing spiritual and political views from support of black separatism and public railings against the Los Angeles Police Department which he likened to "Nazi Germany & the Gestapo police methods practiced there against the Jews" to a later call for unity.

The papers show his mistrust of John F. Kennedy and other liberals and a growing belief that not all whites were to blame for the plight of African Americans. ***Reuters***

A WOMAN counts votes following yesterday's Irish abortion referendum in Dublin, March 7. REUTERS

Irish voters dump move to tighten abortion ban

DUBLIN—Staunchly Catholic Ireland narrowly rejected a government bid to tighten a constitutional ban on abortion Thursday, dealing Prime Minister Bertie Ahern a setback several months ahead of elections.

According to the final official result, the proposal was defeated by 50.42 percent to 49.58, one of the tightest ever referendum results here.

It also exposed a gaping urban/rural divide, with the results in Dublin and other cities effectively swinging it for the "no" camp over the traditionally more conservative countryside.

"I am disappointed, but I am a democrat. That is the decision," Ahern told reporters in Dublin.

"The people have spoken. The people's choice is the final word."

The referendum Wednesday, which was supported by the Roman Catholic Church, asked people to get rid of a legal loophole under which abortion is allowable if a pregnant woman is suicidal.

Otherwise, under Ireland's 1937 Constitution, termination of a pregnancy is illegal unless there is a serious medical risk to the mother's life.

The defeat is a setback for Ahern, as he had invested much time and effort into the issue, and it will mar his Fianna Fail party's annual congress this weekend.

It also recalls the last Irish referendum which also proved an embarrassment for the prime minister. ***AFP***

Chinese pols love numeric action calls

By Ted Anthony

BEIJING—Mao Tse-tung had his "Three Antis," his "Four Cleanups," even his "Stinking Ninth Category." For Deng Xiaoping, it was "One Country, Two Systems." Now President Jiang Zemin has his "Three Represents."

It's a favorite tradition of China's communists: spreading propaganda via pithy numeric sayings. And the government's practice of putting big theories into small packages for the illiterate or uninterested masses endures at the current National People's Congress.

Grammatically awkward though it may be in English, "Three Represents"—the core of Jiang's manifesto on the party's future—is the latest incarnation of a tactic in use since the 1949 revolution. Premier Zhu Rongji was invoking it this week a mere five minutes after the legislature was called to order.

George Wei, a historian of modern China who teaches at Susquehanna University in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania, says the use of numbers is a way of mobilizing the nation.

"Every time the party has new propaganda, it has a long huge document. And nobody can understand it. But if you put things into a slogan that is clear and makes a few points, then people will remember it," he said.

China brims with examples of numbers used to guide thought. Chinese pride themselves in their knowledge of "chengyu," which wrangle complex ideas into bite-size four-character idioms. Its version of "six of one, half a dozen of the other," for example: "banjin, baliang," which means half a pound, eight ounces. ***AP***

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'Jueteng' whistleblower on the run

ANGELES CITY—A jueteng whistleblower here has become the object of pursuit by both Sen. Panfilo Lacson and Chief Supt. Reynaldo Berroya since Thursday, each one wanting to get him as a witness in Monday's Senate hearing on the illegal numbers game.

A certain Gerry de Belen, who identified himself as a member of Lacson's staff, had contacted a reporter on Thursday to ask how to get in touch with Ruben Marin, a *cabo* (jueteng area manager) who exposed the operations of Melchor Caluag, said to be the biggest jueteng financier in Pampanga.

Marin reportedly approached the reporter to tell him about the death threats that he received after his rift with Caluag, also known as Ngo-Ngo, last year.

Marin said De Belen called him on Thursday to say that Lacson wanted him (Marin) to testify before the Senate committee on peace and order.

The committee, led by Sen. Robert Barbers, has called for a hearing on Lacson's claim last November that top police officials, including Berroya, were protecting jueteng operations.

The reporter declined to give Marin's contact numbers to De Belen, saying these were entrusted in confidentiality.

But the whistleblower, who expressed no plan to share insider information to the Senate, had disappeared.

De Belen reported locating the house of Marin in Barangay Pandan here but said this has been abandoned.

Reporters had tried calling Marin since Wednesday, a day after the National Bureau of Investigation staged simultaneous raids on Caluag's jueteng dens in 11 villages in San Fernando and Angeles cities.

Police sources said NBI operatives in Central Luzon had based the raids on Marin's information.

NBI agents arrested at least 50 jueteng collectors, including six minors.

Berroya, Central Luzon police chief, also confirmed that Marin had disappeared since Thursday. He said the policemen he ordered to serve the summons on Marin had failed to locate him.

Berroya would not say if Lacson, his arch-enemy, was hunting Marin to draw evidence against him.

Lacson, former chief of the Philippine National Police, had claimed that Berroya had received P3 million in monthly protection money from jueteng operators.

Berroya said he wanted Marin to cooperate in the investigation of jueteng operations in Pampanga. A report on this would be presented to the Senate, he said. ***Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	HI30° Lo20°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	HI 21° Lo 09°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	HI 27° Lo 16°
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	HI 25° Lo 18°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	HI 29° Lo 17°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	HI 25° Lo 17°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	HI 26° Lo 23°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	HI 28° Lo 19°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 22°
Roxas	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 24°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 24°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 23°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	HI 30° Lo 23°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 23°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	HI 29° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/03/09/02

ROUNDUP

Marijuana plants uprooted

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Members of the Sarangani Police Command uprooted some 4,000 marijuana plants and seized 1,000 cannabis seedlings during a raid on a four-hectare marijuana plantation in a remote village of Malungon town. Senior Supt. Cesar Daquil, Sarangani police director, yesterday said the illegal crop was valued at P1.2 million. He said the marijuana plantation, which sits on Mt. Magulo in Barangay Datal Batong, could not be reached by car and the raiding team had to walk for hours. The planters, led by a Commander Du, eluded arrest.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Rice truck hijacked

STO. TOMAS, Batangas—Six unidentified armed men hijacked a truck loaded with rice worth P400,000 Wednesday in Lucena City. Truck driver Artemio Duran, 52, of Lucena City and his assistant Nilo Duran, 48, of Malang, Quezon told the police that they were on board an Isuzu 10-wheel delivery truck loaded with 506 bags of rice from Bocaue, Bulacan and bound for Lucena City when they were flagged down by six armed men. Held at gunpoint, the two were ordered to transfer to the suspects' vehicle and were released the same day in Cubao, Quezon City.

Mel Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

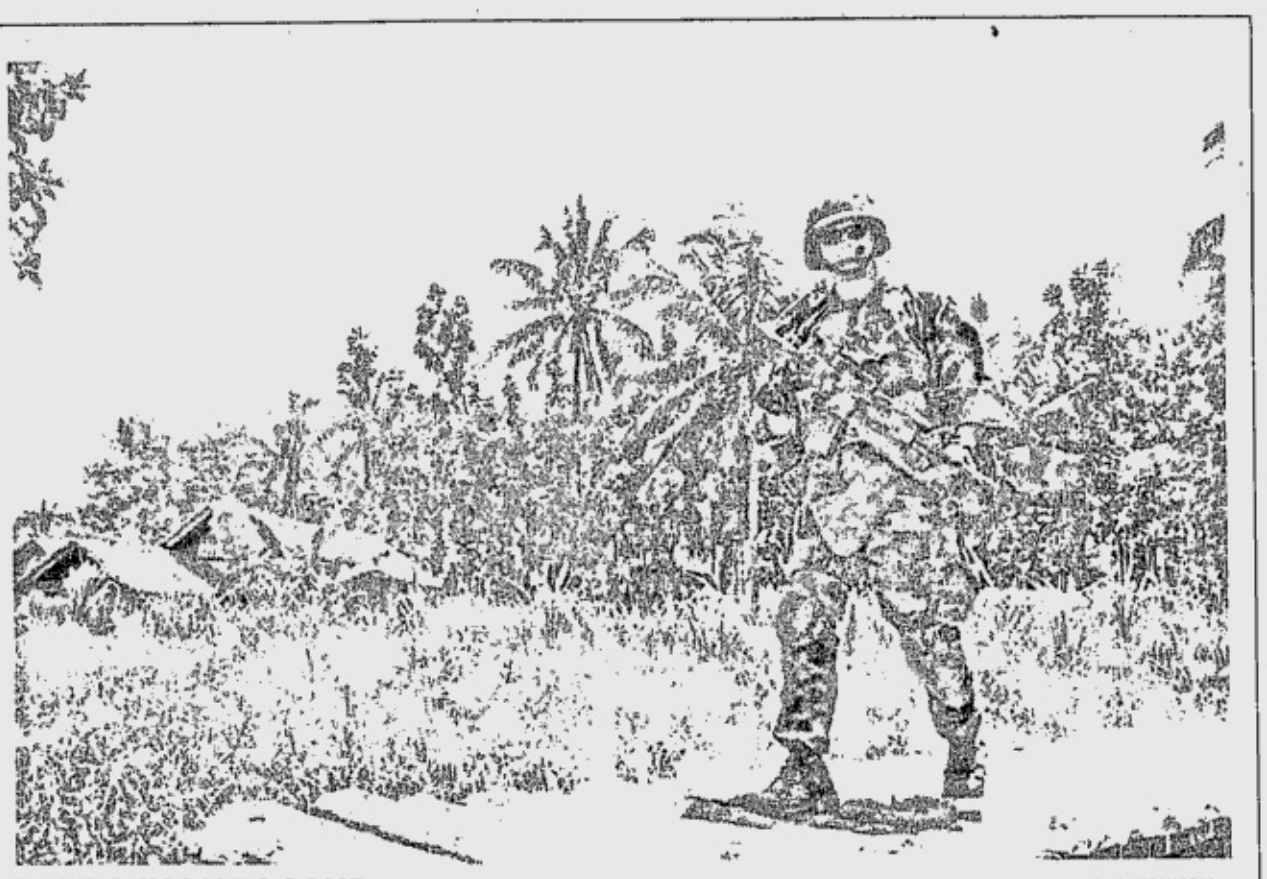
Most wanted to yield

LEGAZPI CITY—A former member of the defunct Philippine Constabulary and now Bicol's most wanted person Jolito Leosala, alias Commander Awa, will surrender anytime before his 49th birthday in June. Leosala is facing multiple criminal charges in court. He is the suspect in the killing of former Pilar, Sorsogon Mayor Emmanuel Sia and of being behind a series of robbery-holdups in the Pilar-Donsol area. There is a P1-million reward for his capture, dead or alive. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

DILG monitors LGUs

STA. CRUZ, Laguna—The Department of Interior and Local Government is now monitoring provinces, cities and municipalities following its implementation of the Local Development Watch project. Local Government Secretary Jose Lina Jr., in a press statement sent to the INQUIRER, said the project would measure the state of development of local governments throughout the country. An Internet-based system, the project is now being tested in 20 cities and 19 towns.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau



RAMBO IN MORO LAND VAL HANDUMON

A member of the US Special Forces patrols the village of Tabuk in Isabela, Basilan, conjuring up images of Hollywood war movies where the good guy is often a Caucasian man with near invincibility.

Rebels step up attacks, kill suspected spy

CAMP MELCHOR DE LA CRUZ, Isabela—Armed men believed to be New People's Army rebels shot and killed a village chief on Tuesday in Echague town, reports here said.

The killing of Ramon Valiente of Barangay Caniguing in Echague came after suspected rebels ransacked a farmhouse owned by a town mayor in Quirino, Isabela, and burned a jeep in Piat, Cagayan, last week.

Reports said Valiente's body was riddled with Armalite bullets. Prior to his murder, Valiente had received death threats from the NPA's Benito Tesorio Command operating in southern Isabela, the reports said.

The reports said the rebels executed Valiente for spying for the military.

Last week, suspected rebels, led by Jose Asco alias Ka Baylon of the NPA Apayao-Cagayan party committee, burned a jeep owned by businessman Gabriel Moto, 43, whom they suspected to be a military spy.

Moto also refused to give revolutionary taxes to the rebel group, reports said.

Rebels under the NPA's Filomena Asuncion Front operating in northern Isabela also ransacked the farmhouse of Mayor Eduardo Juan of Quirino, Isabela, and took away farm implements and other belongings.

The military said the attack on Juan's farm was a "retaliatory move" of the rebels after five of their men were killed in an encounter at Barangay Dolores in Quirino town.

Killed rebels

In the Bicol Region, three NPA rebels were killed Thursday while three others were captured in separate encounters with police and government troopers.

Killed in a firefight in Barangay Calatagan, Virac, Catanduanes was a Ka July, while his three companions Allan Pitajen of Barangay Buyo, Rene Dorol of San Pedro Gigmoto, and Obet Vargas, all of Catanduanes province, were captured. ***Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau and Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

300 rally in Tacloban to protest more rice imports

TACLOBAN CITY—Close to 300 persons, including employees of the National Food Authority (NFA), yesterday marched on the city's streets to protest the decision of President Macapagal-Arroyo to privatize rice importation.

The protesters said the President's decision to privatize rice importation would not only be detrimental to the interest of farmers but to consumers as well.

Joining the 22 NFA employees in the rally were grain retailers, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, Kalipunan ng Damayang Mahihirap, the League of Filipino Students, the Students Christian Movement of the Philippines and the Concerned Citizen for Justice and Peace.

The ralliers carried placards and streamers that read "No to privatization of rice importation," and "We are calling for the President to scrap NFA privatization."

President Macapagal announced on Feb. 15 that 390,000 metric tons of rice would be imported this year. Half of the importation would be allotted for rice traders and the other half for farmers.

Ruben Manatad, NFA Employees Association national board member, said the President had completely disregarded farmers' demands, consumers and grains retailers when she allowed the privatization of rice importation.

He added that Ms Macapagal made the policy even if she knew that all the government needed to do was to focus on rice self-sufficiency and improve rice production. ***Cynthia Borgueta, PDI Visayas Bureau***

GMA says discounts for elderly difficult to implement

LUCENA CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo admitted before an assembly of senior citizens here late Tuesday that their mandated 20-percent discount privilege, as provided for by the Senior Citizens Act, is difficult to implement.

The reason is that there are now lots of card-bearing senior citizens who are all asking for the mandated 20-percent discount in all business establishments, she said. "It could result in many of the establishments soon ending up losing their businesses. That's the problem in its implementation," Ms Macapagal explained to at least 1,500 *lolos* and *lolas* who patiently waited for her to arrive at the Lucena West Elementary School here.

"There are now lots of registered senior citizens that are not really indigents," Ms Macapagal told the crowd.

She recalled that when she was still vice president and also secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development, they tried to correct the situation through the issuance of new IDs.

"But even if we have changed the old card, the system is still the same," she said.

She also recalled an occasion where the restaurant operator at Wack-Wack Golf and Country Club closed shop because of the highly irregular use of the 20-percent discount privilege by the old members of the exclusive association.

"Since when (did) the members of Wack-Wack Golf and Country Club hold senior citizens cards?" she asked, to the amusement of the crowd. But she quickly added that that was a long time ago.

The Senior Citizens Law, embodied in Republic Act No. 7432 of 1992, gives certain privileges to all registered senior citizens that are 60 years old and above and have an income of P60,000 and below.

The law mandates that a card-bearing elderly is entitled to a 20-percent discount in all business firms for the use of transportation services, hotels, restaurants and recreation centers, and the purchase of medicine anywhere in the country.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said there are some areas where some drugstores really could not comply with the law.

"We cannot blame drugstores if their mark-up is below 20 percent. It's hard for them to give (discounts). They will lose," she said.

She admitted though that "medical concern" was the most important among elderly Filipinos, based on a survey she conducted as former social welfare secretary.

The President told the assembly of senior citizens that they could buy medicines from government hospitals at a 50 percent discount.

Mayor Ramon Talaga Jr. said he had allocated P50 million for the city *botika* where senior citizens can buy medicines at the lowest price possible.

"There are 13,000 registered senior citizens in this city, the government cannot afford to just set aside and ignore their legitimate concern," Talaga said.

Senior citizens here have long been complaining of getting second-class treatment from most drugstores here, which refuse to comply with the provision of RA 7432 or the Senior Citizens Act. ***Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

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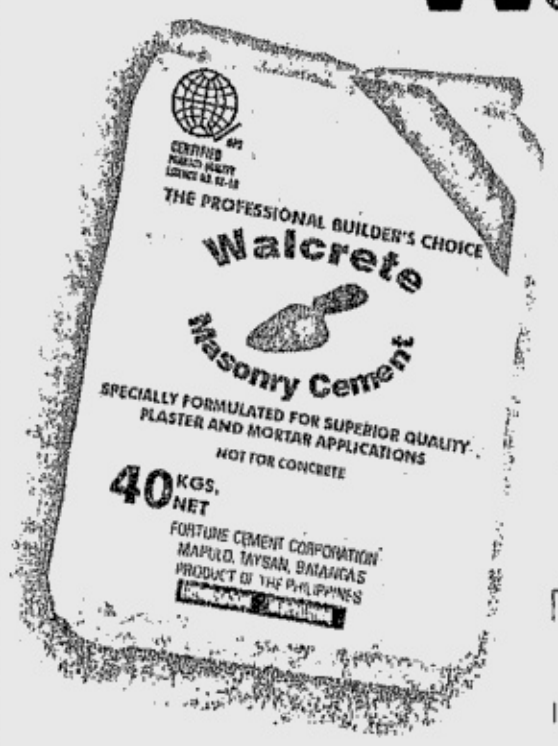

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(9) 2ND PRIZE	**KITCHEN SHOWCASE** La Germania Range, Whirlpool Microwave Oven, 8.5 cu. ft. National Refrigerator		
(9) 3RD PRIZE	**LIVING ROOM SHOWCASE** Sofa Back Table, Alessa Living Room Set, Center Table, 2 Side Tables		

	GRAND DRAW PRIZES*	DRAW DATE	DEADLINE OF ENTRIES
(5) 1ST PRIZE	**HOUSE & LOT****	July 5, 2002	June 28, 2002
(5) 2ND PRIZE	**2002 MITSUBISHI ADVENTURE GLX-GAS**		
(4) 3RD PRIZE	**HOME SHOWCASE** Combination Entertainment, Kitchen, Living Room Showcase		
(40) CONSOLATION PRIZES	**LIVING ROOM SHOWCASE** Sofa Back Table, Living Room Set, Center Table, 2 Side Tables		

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*Actual prizes may vary from ones shown here. All prizes are tax-free. Houses and lots are convertible to P1.5M each. Home, entertainment, kitchen, and living room showcases are convertible to gift certificates equivalent to their respective cash values.

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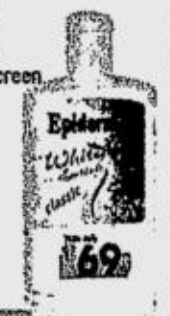

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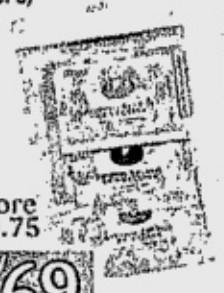

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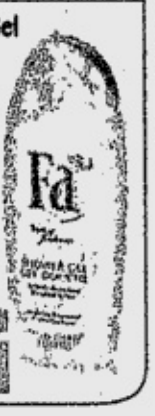

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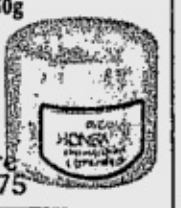

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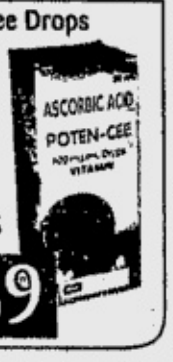

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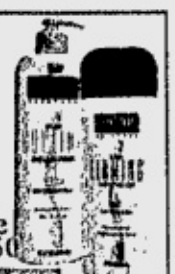

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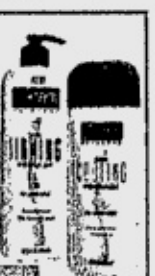

before P359.50
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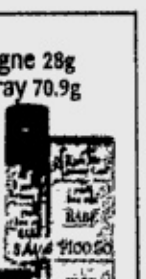
Brut Babe Spray Cologne 28g & Body Spray 70.9g



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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0432 series of 2002

INQUIRER Visayas
Editor Jun Bandayrel • Bureau Chief Edralyn L. Benedicto

Iloilo town remembers common folk's heroism

By Hazel P. Villa
Miagao, Iloilo

THE HISTORIC town of Miagao is famous for its 205-year-old eclectic fortress-church, one of the few structures in the Philippines that is included in the World Heritage List of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco).

While tourists marvel over the church's unique and imposing architectural design, motifs and ornaments, locals put more emphasis on their ancestors' bravery in repulsing Moro pirates that gave birth to such a magnificent church.

On its 286th foundation anniversary and fourth year of officially celebrating the victory of Miagaowanons against the biggest pirate raid on May 7, 1754, Miagao returned to the roots of bravery through the Salakayan Festival, a reenactment and celebration of that eventful day when Moro pirates were driven back to sea.

With the festival theme, "*Pagpasidungog sa Miagaowanon nga kaisog* (Celebrating Miagaowanon bravery)," townsfolk and visitors went to the seashore in Barangay Baybay Norte B as early as 6 a.m. on Feb. 9 to participate in the reenactment and the fluvial parade.

"In the previous Salakayan festivals and other reenactments prior to this, too many elements were added to the reenactment that were not true to history. This time, we are showing what could possibly be the nearest to what actually happened (in 1754)," said Miagao Mayor Gerardo Flores, a retired general.

True to historical roots

The reenactment went back to its historical roots in a production managed by locals and professors from the University of the Philippines in the Visayas-Miagao campus.

The one-hour production, based on researches of UPV's Center for West Visayas Studies (CWVS), depicted the prosperous life of the pre-Spanish Miagao townsfolk, their conversion to Roman Catholicism and the construction of the first local parish church made of wood.

The highlight was the reenactment of the frequent Moro raids that had the pirates looting the town, burning the church and abusing its womenfolk.

According to local historians Randy Madrid and Jorge Ebay, pirates first burned the local church in Ubos in 1741, then in 1747 until it was finally moved in 1786 to its current location at the town's hilly portion called Tacas.

The biggest raid on May 7, 1754 saw pirates riding in 21 vintas and landing in Baybay Norte (the Salakayan reenactment site). The Miagao townsfolk, fed up with the many raids, faced the pirates with bolos and spears, driving them back to their vintas.

The Miagaowanons celebrated their victory with merrymaking by the seashore and a fluvial procession bearing the image of Nuestra Señora de la Paz y Buen Viaje, now the patron saint of the Baybay area.

ARNOLD ALMACEN

A 'HIGANTE' provides entertainment and nostalgia to Miagao folk.

According to the research of the CWVS, the friar, *gobernadorcillo*, Spanish officers and *principalias* in the town gave the image to the Hermana Mayor who promised to continue the fluvial tradition in the future. Such was also shown in the reenactment where 30 decorated *bancas* participated.

Added attraction

The *Higantes* (giants) came into the Salakayan picture as part of the added attraction of the festival. After the reenactment by the beach, about 50 *Higantes* from 119 barangays with an average height of eight feet danced in the main streets of Miagao, to the delight of the townsfolk and the judges, as this was the first time they saw that many giants made of papier-mâché or bamboo.

The *Higantes* were dressed up in indigenous materials like straw, cogon, rice stalks, ferns, coconut husks, sacks, bamboos and the town's product--the *patadiong* or native, soft, loom-woven cloth.

The winners in this year's *Higantes* contest were: Most symbolic, Barangay Damilisan; Erotic, Barangay Palaca; Funniest face, Cubay; Creative, Igpuro Bariri; Best Male *Higante*, Damilisan and Best Female *Higante*, Kirayan Sur.

Historically, the residents of Baybay Norte paraded the *Higantes* during the feast of Sta. Cecilia on Nov. 22 and the feast of Nuestra Señora de la Paz y Buen Viaje on Jan. 24 every year.

According to the undergraduate thesis of UP student Alvin Joseph Novilla, Miagao oral tradition stated that the *Higantes* are "lucky charms for fishing activities because they tend to ensure an abundant catch."

Like any other festival in the Philippines, the Salakayan had its festival queen in 17-year-old Michelle Montaño Herrera who took a breather from the James Logan High School in Union City, California, USA to visit her mother's roots in Miagao.

Antique exhibit

This year's Salakayan Festival also had an antiques exhibit at the newly renovated municipal town hall.

Among the wooden saints, china, pottery, lace, *patadiong* weaving loom and brittle books was a burial urn said to date back to the pre-Spanish period when the custom of burying the dead inside an urn was prevalent.

Discovered by municipal employee Gerard Fortuna in his family farm in Barangay San Rafael, the urn was already fragmented and contained human bones when they were dug out. With the bones were gold filigree pieces thought to be the jewelry of the dead.

Pardo farmers: Keeping land reform alive in Cebu

By Marivir Montebon-Auxilio
Cebu City

THE TIDE has turned against them now. But farmer-beneficiaries of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program in the hilly portion of Cebu City's Barangay Pardo vowed to stay on the land despite the appellate court's decision reversing the implementation of CARP in favor of their prominent landowner, the Aznar Brothers Inc.

The contested 32.88-hectare land is home to 66 farmers and their families who have bravely stood their ground in the name of agrarian reform for the past 14 years. The land is part of the 118-hectare property that was originally covered by Presidential Decree No. 27, the rice and corn land reform program of the late President Ferdinand Marcos, and now the CARP.

But the Aznars were able to reclaim ownership of the remaining land reform area in Mahayahay, Kabuguhan, and Antwanga through the Court of Appeals' decision on Aug. 21, 1997. Hence, the farmers and other residents in the area, about 200 of them, are bracing themselves for eviction.

When Municipal Trial Court in Cities Branch V court sheriff Edmund Barriga came on Wednesday, along with a 55-member demolition crew escorted by 60 armed policemen, the farmers formed a human barricade and stood their ground. The sheriff decided to defer enforcing the eviction notice, and avoided having blood spilled on the disputed land.

"If the demolition pushed through, it was likely that chaos would have erupted because the residents were no longer afraid," Barriga said in Cebuano. "I would just explain to the Aznars that it is dangerous to push through with the demolition order."

Infotech university

The Aznars, a prominent Cebu family, plans to establish an information technology university in the disputed site. In the early 1990s, it entered into a joint venture with the Sta. Lucia Development Corp. and developed the posh 18-hole Alta Vista golf course right inside the 118-hectare land reform area. The projects are not without social cost. But the affected residents, mostly Aznars' own tenants, did not take the matter sitting down.

"What is legal is not necessarily moral. The Aznars might have won the legal battle now, but we are fighting this to the end because we have labored in this land for many years," said Rovic Ybag, leader of the organization Baruganan alang sa Repormang Agraryo (Bara).

Ybag said they would continue to set up human barricades to protect their lands and farms from the demolition team. Their lawyer, Jose Vicente Arnado, has likewise filed a temporary restraining order before the sala of MTCC Judge Oscar Andrino to get a 20-day relief. The judge has yet to make a ruling.

Bara farmers are currently facing charges of unlawful detainer with damages after the CA nullified the 1993 decision of then Agrarian Reform Secretary Ernesto Garilao that the area is covered by the Operation Land Transfer (OLT) of PD 27.

JUNJIE MENDOZA

LAST DEFENSE for land reform in an area where reforms always threaten the status quo.

Associate Justice Eubulo Verzola of the CA's 8th division, in his decision dated Aug. 21, 1997, declared that the land in question was residential, by virtue of the 1950 local zoning ordinance and therefore not covered by CARP. This was the same argument used by the Aznars when they lost their bid to oppose land reform before the office of the agrarian reform secretary and the adjudication board.

As an effect of the CA decision, Bara farmers are now ordered by the MTCC to pay at least P3 million in damages for having illegally stayed on the Aznar land.

'Crazy law'

"The law is crazy. Why are we made to pay the Aznars when we are land reform beneficiaries," lamented farmer leader Adriana Varga in Cebuano.

In 1988, the DAR placed the 118-hectare land under OLT. A year later, the Aznars protested the move citing that the area is not classified agricultural but residential based on a 1950 municipal zoning ordinance.

Garilao, in a memorandum dated Oct. 15, 1993 and May 14, 1996, twice ruled to the favor of the farmers as they have proven themselves to be the share-tenants of the Aznars.

Forty-one-year-old Varga, for one, said she has stayed and farmed in Sitio Kabuguhan for the past 30 years. She said her grandfather and father were also tenants of the Aznars.

Despite the DAR's decision, the SLRDC and the Aznars went on with their plan to develop the land. The lands were bulldozed during the wee hours of the night in the proverbial "when the cat is out the mouse will play" trick, until finally the Alta Vista golf course was completed.

Bara, through its old leader the late Benito Abellar, brought their tug-of-war to court. The Aznars and the SLRDC thus paid the farmers a P5.5-million damage compensation. They also provided Bara's 27 affected members with home lots and farm lots in exchange for their lands that were bulldozed to give way to the golf course.

The Aznars, however, elevated their case to the CA and was granted their petition to reclaim ownership of the remaining 32.88-hectare land presently occupied and titled by 66 other Bara members.

Aznar's side

Merelo Aznar Jr., in an interview with the INQUIRER, said that Bara waived its members' rights to the land when it entered into an agreement with his company and the SLRDC upon receiving their damage compensation, hence they should be prepared to leave.

Item No. 5 of the MOA stated: "With the foregoing arrangements (conveyance of lots and P5.5M damage compensation), the Bara and its members hereby agree that SDRDI may proceed with the full development of its project . . . For this purpose, the Bara and its members hereby agree to immediately vacate the area subject for development and the area covered by Operation Land Transfer . . ."

But farmer leader Varga, who was then in the negotiating table with the Aznars, insisted that the MOA covered only the 27 members who were affected by the bulldozing activities of SLRDI in Kaduldulan and Bulacao where the post Alta Vista Clubhouse and golf course are located.

"*Ka-swapang sa mga* Aznar. *Ang* MOA *naglangkob ra man sa* 27 *namo ka mga miembro nga apektado didto sa* Kaduldulan *ug* Bulacao. *Naa na karon sila sa ilang* relocation site. *Kaming mga* 66 *ka miembro nga naa sa* 32 *hectarya papahawaon na sad,* (How greedy the Aznars are. The MOA covered only 27 of our members who were affected in Kaduldulan and Bulacao. They now have their relocation site. Now the Aznars are evicting 66 of us who are in the 32-hectare lot for a long time now)," Varga said.

Aznar said during a recent dialogue with Mayor Tomas Osmeña and the Bara leaders that the remaining 32.88 hectares will be used as school site of the Aznar-owned Southwestern University.

Osmeña, for his part, offered to look for a relocation site for Bara. But the group did not pin high hopes on that as they see the mayor as biased against the plight of the city's farmers and vendors.

Help

What came as a relief for the beleaguered Bara members was when Pardo parish priest Msgr. Constantino Dyutay came to see them and said Mass over the weekend in their chapel which Bara built in 1995 as a form of thanksgiving for its victory.

Msgr. Dyutay told the farmers that he will bring their concerns to Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal so that legal assistance through the diocese's legal bureau could be provided them.

"I just want the truth to come out. I come here in solidarity with them. It is part of my duty as a parish priest," he said in an interview.

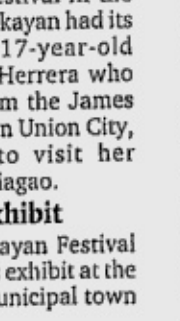
In the meantime that a demolition team is yet to return, Bara is taking steps to raise their concern into an inquiry in aid of legislation at the House of Representatives committee on agrarian reform through Rep. Antonio Cuenco and Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo.

Bara's initial victory with land reform in 1993 did not come easy. It cost them the death of farmer leader Olympia Caneda and 26-year-old Samuel Tardin who actively took part in stopping the bulldozers to raze their farms. The two were felled by the bullets of notorious gun-for-hire Mario Abendan who is presently serving prison.

Varga said she is prepared for the worst. "*Kon pobre ka, nya di ka mobarog sa imong katungod, padayon ka nga iduot sa mga dato* (If you are poor and you don't stand for your rights, you will be trampled upon by the rich)," she said. ***With a report by Joy de la Peña***

Hot issues

BACOLOD EXCHANGE



Ninfa R. Leonardia

THE WEEK started with a lot of headliners, top among them the Central Negros Electric Cooperative's impending election of three board members with the incumbents having already reached the end of their terms.

Although there are challengers, the incumbents are not about to give up their posts, especially with the ongoing charges and investigation poised against them by irate consumers.

As soon as the deadline for the filing of certificates of candidacies came up, however, the contenders fell all over each other with petitions for disqualification, citing non-compliance with requirements, false statements in certificates of candidacies, or even bad payment records with the cooperative in the past.

As of this writing, two challengers have already been disqualified by the screening committee. Ramon Lacson, who was eased out for alleged electrical connection violations noted in a family-owned building in 1995, has threatened to sue both Ceneco and the National Electrification Administration, saying that he was not the one who was questioned for the alleged violation.

On Tuesday, another candidate fell by the wayside, courtesy of the Ceneco Election Screening Committee. Aurelio Puentevella, brother of the Bacolod congressman, was also disqualified when it was found that he was not a resident of the area that he was hoping to represent. The committee came up with proof that he had already sold his residence there and is now living somewhere else.

The election will be held March 23 yet but already the atmosphere in the city is as tense as in a regular political exercise, with candidates plastering their districts with campaign materials.

* * *

But the Ceneco issue took a backseat Tuesday when news broke out that the former vice mayor of Bacolod, who is also a former Bombo Radyo award-winning host, had finally surrendered and would start serving the 60-day sentence meted him by the Municipal Trial Court in Cities.

MTCC Judge Alfredo Hilario had ordered the arrest of Alex Paglumotan on Feb. 20, after the Supreme Court had rejected his appeal for reconsideration. Paglumotan and two other Bombo Radyo men, Frank Palma and Sonny Flores, had been found guilty of hitting and injuring with a GI pipe two men at the parking lot of the Hall of Justice in Bacolod City.

Palma had since died and Flores surrendered the day after but Paglumotan only turned up Tuesday before the chief of police. Media people present noted a very much subdued Paglumotan, a far cry from the fiery and hard-

HOT/P. 15

Hot issues

(From page 14)

hitting commentator who later turned politician.

* * *

Another hot issue in the city is the case of the province's popular basketball team, the Negros Slashers, one of the hotshots of the Metropolitan Basketball Association. Already besieged by financial problems after the withdrawal of support from the ABS-CBN, the team is now rent by the conflict between its general managers, Babes Alvarez, and its coach Robert Sison.

Alleging that Sison had been violating several rules of the team and charging him with "lack of proper time management, habitual tardiness," and with causing disunity and dissension within the team, Alvarez later sacked Sison.

Claiming that he still had a contract with the team that is to expire in December yet, Sison and his lawyers have sued Alvarez and the team, seeking P1.6 million in damages. He has also sought an injunction and the issuance of a temporary restraining order against the team. So the Slashers are now playing another kind of game in a different court.

* * *

In the meantime, Bacolod City did win the "cleanest and greenest" award as expected by the administration, but to the embarrassment of its residents who had been complaining about the smelly piles of garbage all over the city. That was probably why the officials bringing home the trophy from Malacañang were booed during their motorcade.

Anyway, one can only imagine how the other contending cities like Davao, Olongapo, Cebu and the rest must look if this is how the cleanest and greenest looks.

* * *

In Negros Occidental province, accountants are still poring over their records to prove that the province does not owe the Government Service Insurance System the P9.9 million it is being dunned for as unremitted premiums.

However, its officials got into the limelight themselves when it was discovered that the province had been going on a vehicle-buying spree for each board member. Their beneficiaries are getting P4.1 million worth of Nissan Frontiers 4x4, Ford Rangers 4x3, Toyota Revos GLX.

Gov. Joseph Marañon justified the purchases as necessary because the old vehicles are already rundown. In fact, one is also being purchased for his use.

The local Graftwatch head, Dr. Patricio Tan, does not agree and wants the officials to reconsider the expense, citing what he called "public outrage and massive media condemnation." He hinted at bringing the matter to the Ombudsman, but that is nothing new to officials here. And so the luxury vehicle issue rides on.

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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

'MILF chief did not return because he did not leave'

By Allan A. Nawal, Charlie S. Señase and Ayan C. Mellejor
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—The presidential assistant for Mindanao and the spokesperson of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) yesterday said that MILF chair Salamat Hashim could not have returned from exile as Hashim did not leave the country in the first place.

"If Salamat had fled the country, then who was the one I have been talking to in Liguasan Marsh," asked Jesus Dureza, presidential assistant for Mindanao.

A military intelligence report said Hashim had slipped into Southern Philippines from Saudi Arabia and ordered his followers to step up attacks on government targets.

Dureza said the report could be part of a propaganda spin, which he does not want to be part of.

Intelligence reports should be treated with caution because these are raw information, and most often than not are just rumors, he said.

Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said Hashim could not probably slip into the country because "he has not left at all."

"Even at the height of the all-out war against the MILF last year, he remained in Mindanao," Kabalu said.

But he declined to divulge where Salamat was staying. "He is just around," Kabalu said.

Dureza said reports about Hashim's return were affecting the already shaky peace negotiations between the government and the MILF.

"These reports have a serious impact on the peace negotiation," he said.

Talks not suspended

Dureza also clarified reports that the peace talks with the MILF had been suspended.

"There was no suspension of the peace talks. (But) there is an ongoing reassessment in the conduct of the peace negotiations," he told reporters in Davao City.

Dureza said there could be no suspension because the resumption of the meeting by the main panels has yet to be scheduled after their discussions in Malaysia in October last year.

"We have not yet agreed to meet, so how can there be a suspension?" he said.

In Cotabato City, chief government negotiator Eduardo Ermita said the government was not backing out of the peace process despite the reported plan of the MILF to sow terror.

Ermita, in an interview over Radio dxMY, said no amount of atrocities from the MILF could force the government from abandoning the negotiations.

Ermita said there was no decision to suspend the peace talks. "The (peace) talk has not bogged down. We will work for its continuance," he said in Filipino.

He said the government and the MILF were trying to iron out some problems hounding the ceasefire accord that both sides signed in Kuala Lumpur on Aug. 7 last year.

"This was the reason why we agreed to temporarily suspend the talks while resolving the conflict," he said.

But Ermita said the meeting of the technical committees on March 13 would push through as scheduled in Cotabato City.

Encounters

The meeting was called "to thresh out any misunderstanding that may result from the misencounters."

Col. Jose Salazar, 301st Brigade chief, said that since February there had been 22 encounters near Hill 150, a former MILF camp in Maguindanao the military captured on March 3, 2002.

Kabalu said it was wrong to say that the peace process hit a snag.

"The other side should be informed about the desire of the proponent of the suspension to back out. Unless this is done, then there is no basis to say that the peace talks was suspended," Kabalu said.

He said the more appropriate term would be "delay."

No instructions

Ghazali Jaafar, MILF political affairs chief, said the MILF had already asked the government panel to agree on a proposed investigation of the skirmishes in Maguindanao.

"It would be very important, because it will determine, once and for all, who started the encounters that were being attributed to the MILF," Jaafar said.

Ebrahim Murad, MILF military chief, said he was not surprised by the military report that the MILF was plotting to sow violence by attacking government and civilian installations in Mindanao.

"There was never an order for such action against the Government of the Republic of the Philippines.

The chair does not give orders particularly on any military action," Murad said.

He noted that in the MILF's more than 20 years of existence Salamat never handed down orders, except on matters that cover the practice of Islam.

"We are governed by a central committee, which decides on what actions the MILF will take against any aggressor. If such action is decided, I then hand down the order as vice chair for military affairs and chief-of-staff," Murad said from Malaysia.

He said the only order he issued since the resumption of the peace talks last year was for MILF guerrillas to stand back and observe the ceasefire agreement signed in Kuala Lumpur.

"We are very sincere in finding solutions to the age-old problem of Muslims in the Philippines, and from our view, we should also try the peaceful way. That's why we are talking with the government," Murad said.

Murad said individuals, who do not want peace to reign in Mindanao, had survived despite the change in administration.

"These were the same people who instigated former President Joseph Estrada to launch attacks against us, despite the existence of a ceasefire agreement and the peace process," Murad said.

He declined to identify these people, but added that some of them hold high government positions.

Murad suggested that the Macapagal administration provide the MILF with a copy of Hashim's supposed order to the MILF peace panel "for authentication."

He also advised some people in the government to refrain from "painting issues" against the MILF.

"It would never do the people of Mindanao any good. Maybe, it would be good for them because war could bring them money," he said.

The MILF earlier said the war in Mindanao had become a source of income for some people in the government, because they double as gunrunners.

Kickback

The rebel group charged that some military commanders did not want any peace because they would lose their kickbacks from arms and ammunition procurement.

Maguindanao officials led by its governor, Andal Ampatuan, are pushing the government to launch an offensive against the MILF.

The Department of National Defense released a letter from Ampatuan in which he asked President Macapagal-Arroyo for more assistance in the fight against the MILF.

Ampatuan asked for a bigger military contingent for his area, suggesting that the military relocate its 301st Brigade headquarters from Sultan Kudarat to Sharif Aguak, Maguindanao.

He also wants the local government's armed civilian volunteers converted into regular members of the Citizens' Armed Force Geographical Unit or Cafgus.

In addition, he wants the Philippine National Police contingent to be given more equipment to enhance its mobility in responding to emergencies.

According to Ampatuan, the MILF has started to regroup in his area and established a training camp in Barangay Pamalian, which located in the boundary of the towns of Sharif Aguak, Datu Piang and Mamasapano.

This camp, he said, was being used as a launching pad for MILF harassment.

Worse, Ampatuan said the MILF was coddling kidnap groups operating in Davao City, General Santos City and Cotabato City.

The letter was handed to Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes on March 6 after his meeting with Ampatuan and eight Maguindanao mayors.

Reyes said in a radio interview that the government was ready for any MILF attempt to start hostilities.

"If they admit that they (plan) new attacks, we are ready," Reyes said over dzRH. ***With reports from Martin P. Marfil in Manila and Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Abu abusers of women–Gloria

By Carlito Pablo

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has taken a new tack in defending the RP-US Balikatan 02-1—that the American military presence would also stop the Abu Sayyaf's abuse of women.

She made the fresh defense in a speech during the graduation ceremonies of the Philippine Women's University at the Philippine International Convention Center, which coincided with yesterday's celebration of International Women's Day.

"One reason I am very adamant that we must defeat the Abu Sayyaf by all constitutional means within our power is the Abu Sayyaf, being the ultimate terrorists, are also the ultimate abusers of women's rights," she said.

The President said the women hostages of the bandit group had reported rape and other physical abuse while in captivity.

She said women who had been held hostage by the bandits had "become more brave in recent times during this administration" and had spoken publicly of their ordeal.

"One by one, they have given us their horror stories of physical rape and abuse that were inflicted on them by the Abu Sayyaf," she said.

She added that the visiting soldiers would "also respect the rights of Filipino women."

The President said the Philippine government had adopted a strict rule that US servicemen would not be allowed to seek the services of prostitutes.

"*Cuentas claras* (Everything is clear)," she said.

Ms Macapagal said the Presidential Commission on the Visiting Forces Agreement, which monitors compliance to the terms of the VFA, had made sure that "women's rights are protected when there is a war, even when there is a partnership among strategic allies."

She said such a rule used to be couched in diplomatic language, like "soldiers should be confined to camp."

"(But this) doesn't really tell us what you want them to do," she said, adding:

"I would rather that the rule be very clear: that visiting forces are not allowed to procure the services of prostitutes."

THE BURNHAMS

Video gives Burnham kin fresh hopes

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ippine government's alleged illegal occupation of Muslim land.

But Agence France Presse yesterday quoted National Security Adviser Roilo Golez as saying that "the government is not going to be pressured by this."

"The government will remain steadfast in its position that there will be no condition insofar as (the Burnhams') release is concerned," he said. "We are not going to listen to any conditions, and the US and Philippine governments are one in this position."

Golez said he had spoken with US Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly on the issue, "and (Kelly) made it very clear that they share our position here—no conditions, and this is non-negotiable."

Then and now

Martin Burnham's parents Paul and Oreta watched at their Wichita home a copy of the tape shown to them by a local television station.

A transcript of the Reuters tape said the latest interview was done in mid-January.

The video showed the Burnhams in front of apparently ornamental vegetation, instead of a jungle in which they appeared in a video aired in November.

They were in the same clothes as in November, but Martin was lacking the handcuffs and Gracia was not wearing the head covering that she used previously.

As the elder Burnhams watched the tape, they questioned when it was shot.

The tape shows Martin wearing the same shirt as in the previous video. But the shirt is in better condition, and he is not wearing the eyeglasses that the family sent him. He wore the glasses in the November video.

Also, the parents noticed that their son's beard was not as full, and that he looked slightly less haggard.

"It's an encouraging thing not to see the old pictures when they're all shriveled up," Oreta Burnham told KAKE-TV.

Defense Secretary Reyes also pointed out that the Burnhams in the video aired Thursday looked healthy, unlike in their November footage.

What was more significant, he said, was that Martin read out five supposed demands of the Abu Sayyaf, and four of them, including the presence of Americans in Saudi Arabia and US intervention in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, were international issues.

He said only one demand concerned the Philippines.

Months after

Golez said he believed the footage shown Thursday must have been shot one or two months after the Burnhams' abduction last May. "This can be gleaned by (their) physical appearance because they look a lot better than in the tape shown (in November), where they looked very emaciated and harassed," he said. "I cannot believe that in the past one month or so that they would be in a much healthier condition insofar as body weight is concerned. The Abu Sayyaf has been under tremendous pressure, and they have always been on the run."

Golez said he believed that the Abu Sayyaf had "pre-taped" the footage shown Thursday "to deodorize their image, because they want to introduce a political angle to their terrorist activities."

"They are trying to say that, look, we are doing this because we are against the United States, against Israel, against so many things; to put a political motive behind the abduction," he added.

In Zamboanga City, AP quoted Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan, spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, as saying there was a "big chance" that the Burnhams would be rescued during the six-month RP-US Balikatan 02-1.

Adan said the sophisticated surveillance and communications equipment brought in by US forces could increase the mobility of Filipino troops pursuing the Abu Sayyaf.

"There is a big chance that during this period, the Burnhams will be eventually recovered and the Abu Sayyaf will be weakened," he said. "The Americans are saying, 'Here we are. Use us . . . Here is our equipment. Here are our troops. Use us.'"

The Abu Sayyaf is also holding hostage Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap. ***Reports from AP, AFP and Martin P. Marfil***

Biazon: Abu-MILF link confirmed

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of the Abu Sayyaf.

But because of the ongoing peace process between the government and the MILF, further pursuit of the Abu Sayyaf was hampered, according to Biazon.

Two former Abu Sayyaf captives said the MILF harbored the bandits in Sumisip town.

Midwife Sheila Tabuñag, 24, and nurse Reina Malonzo, 23, both working at the Don Jose Torres Memorial Hospital in Lamitan, said they personally saw MILF leader Amir Mingkong when the bandit group brought them to the MILF camp in Barangay Erelei.

Sanctuary

"(The MILF) fed us and gave us sanctuary," Tabuñag said.

Malonzo said they stayed inside the MILF camp for almost a month from late July to Aug. 22 last year. She recalled that on Aug. 22, while they were eating breakfast, soldiers started firing mortars at the MILF camp. Malonzo said she was wounded in the arm. Shrapnel hit Tabuñag in the buttocks and thigh.

"I was very afraid then," Tabuñag told the INQUIRER in Lamitan.

Earlier, suspected Abu Sayyaf member Jaid Awalal, who was captured on March 2 in Lamitan, admitted that they indeed sought refuge inside the MILF camp in Parang, Tuburan.

"That's where we brought our wounded comrades too," Awalal said in Tagalog.

For helping the bandit group, Mingkong was paid P300,000, according to Col. Renato Miranda, commander of the 2nd Marine Brigade and chief of the Task Group Tornado.

But Kabalu said Mingkong was not an MILF leader. "He could be related to some MILF leaders in Basilan, but he was never part of the organization," he said.

In the Senate, Biazon said the developments might expand the conduct of the Balikatan war exercises from one confined to the pursuit of the Abu Sayyaf to something covering the MILF.

"These confirmed linkage between the Abu Sayyaf and MILF, and its linkage with Pentagon Gang may lead to a reclassification of the MILF from a purely rebel/secessionist group to that of a terrorist group," Biazon said.

Expanded war exercises

He said an expanded joint RP-US military exercises may be further justified following reports that the MILF was set to conduct intensified operations against the government with the return of MILF chair Salamat Hashim to the country.

Under the rules of engagement signed between the Philippines and the United States, American soldiers can fire back if attacked.

A total of 160 American soldiers are officially engaged in six months of exercises to bolster the capability of Filipino soldiers in fighting the Abu Sayyaf, which is allegedly linked to the al-Qaida network of Osama bin Laden.

An MILF commander said chances of armed contact between the MILF and US Special Forces troops advising Philippines soldiers were growing by the day.

As US and Filipino troops spread out across Basilan, they could encroach on what the MILF considers its territory, Mohamad Murad said.

The MILF is observing a ceasefire signed with the Philippine government in September last year amid peace talks, but President Macapagal-Arroyo suspended formal negotiations earlier this week after the military accused the MILF forces of mounting unprovoked attacks.

"What we are apprehensive of is that if the ground rules of the ceasefire are not being followed, then there are chances of encounter between our forces and American troops," Murad said over ABS-CBN television by telephone.

"So that's why we insist that the ground rules" formalized under the truce be followed, Murad said.

"That is, there should be coordination (with) our troops in identified areas of the MILF."

The military estimates the MILF keeps about a thousand of its 12,500-member guerrilla force in Basilan where the Abu Sayyaf has been keeping the US Christian missionary couple Martin and Gracia Burnham hostage for nearly nine months. ***With a report from AFP***

Hostage boy says Abus released him

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paid ransom in exchange for his and Santos' freedom, and that they were actually "released" by the Abu Sayyaf and not "rescued" by the military.

The senator also said there was no clear indication as to how much Romero had paid, but added that the amount could have been between "P5 million and P25 million."

"We cannot trace which one is accurate, but definitely, he was released," Osmeña said.

He added that the joint congressional team would need "one or two more hearings" to determine if there had been collusion between the Abu Sayyaf and the military.

RJ Recio's father, Buddy Recio, testified in open session Thursday that he had paid P1 million for the release of Angie Montealegre, his sister-in-law.

Montealegre was released by the Abu Sayyaf last Nov. 15, three months after the ransom was paid.

During the hearing, Leyte Rep. Ted Failon asked Buddy Recio whether, with his recent revelation, he would need government protection.

Buddy Recio confirmed that he had been receiving death threats. But he said it was not necessary to include him in the Witness Protection Program.

Media mileage

Pichay, who chairs the House defense committee, noted how Osmeña scored media mileage when he disclosed that he had helped facilitate the payment of ransom for Romero's release.

"We were disappointed because we expected Serge to testify as a first-hand witness," Pichay told the INQUIRER. "But he participated as a member of the Senate and presented other witnesses, not himself."

Pichay also said that instead of testifying on his role in the alleged ransom payment, Osmeña presented the witnesses earlier identified by Lamitan parish priest Fr. Cirilo Nacorda.

"He even had the props, but where's his smoking gun?" Pichay said in reference to the attaché case that the opposition senator brought to the hearing.

The congressman added: "So it turns out that his grave accusation was just a figment of his imagination. His accusation that money changed hands was not proven."

Pichay's committee had earlier terminated its inquiry into the supposed ransom payments and the alleged collusion between the Abu Sayyaf and the military.

But Pichay reopened the inquiry because of Osmeña's revelation and sought a joint hearing with the Senate defense committee to hear the senator's testimony.

Pichay said he and his colleagues came away disappointed that Osmeña did not testify and talked about "nothing new."

For example, the congressman said, Buddy Recio had already admitted before the hearing that he paid ransom for the release of his sister-in-law.

Universe . . .

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Instead, it's a rather ordinary beige.

Two Johns Hopkins University astronomers announced in January that they had averaged all colors from the light of 200,000 galaxies and concluded that if humans could see this combined hue, it would be a sprightly pale green. That, they said, was the color of the universe.

But Karl Glazebrook and Ivan Baldry said Thursday that their January conclusion was tripped up by flawed software that was uncovered by color engineers who checked their data.

"It is embarrassing," Glazebrook said. "But this is science. We're not like politicians. If we make mistakes, we admit them.

That's how science works."

The effect of the software error was that the computer picked a nonstandard white and mixed it with the other colors to come up with the turquoise. When the error was corrected and replaced with a standard white index, beige was the result, Glazebrook said.

"It looks like beige," he said. "I don't know what else to call it. I would welcome suggestions."

In January, Baldry called the turquoise "cosmic spectrum green." But the pair offered no fancy name for the new beige hue.

To find this average color, Glazebrook and Baldry gathered light from galaxies out to several billion light years. They processed the light to break it into the various colors—similar to the way a prism turns sunlight into a rainbow. They averaged the color values for all the light and converted it to the primary color scale seen by the human eye.

Glazebrook said the underlying data was correct; the problem came when the scientific data was converted into a hue compatible with the perception of the human eye.

The astronomer said that expressing the color for popular view was not even part of the original scientific experiment. They did it "as a lark."

"We were doing this as an amusing footnote to our paper," said Glazebrook. "Then there was a huge media thing. We were completely overwhelmed. We didn't expect it to get so big."

The publicity attracted the attention of color engineers who contacted the astronomers and asked for copies of their program software. When the engineers ran the software, they concluded there was a mistake and notified Glazebrook and Baldry.

"It's our fault for not taking the color science seriously enough," said Glazebrook. "I don't like being wrong, but once I found I was, I knew I had to get the word out."

Jail me, Estrada pleads

From page A1

Estrada's fresh attacks on the court came a day after state prosecutors asked the Sandiganbayan to issue a stern warning to his former lawyers who continued to make similar statements in the media.

One of the prosecutors, Alexander Padilla, said on Wednesday that they were withdrawing plans to initiate contempt proceedings against Estrada himself so as not to support his script.

Still President

Referring to Sandoval, Estrada said, "one of you (justices) who has an eye on the Supreme Court wants to place me in the Quezon City jail, forgetting that I am legally the President of the Republic of the Philippines."

Estrada said his position as duly elected President "deserves dignity and respect notwithstanding the opinion of the rubber-stamp Davide-led Supreme Court."

Estrada also took the justices to task for not voluntarily making De Castro inhibit herself out of *delicadeza* when her brother-in-law, Arturo de Castro, took the stand as a prosecution witness.

At one hearing during which Arturo testified as vice president of the Philippine Clearing House Corp., De Castro actually yielded her seat to an alternate justice — but only after the Estrada lawyers had complained.

"Now you want to entertain a move by my enemies relative to *sub judice* statements and attacks on the integrity of the Court. Did you lift a finger whenever a lawyer, who surrendered his California Bar license to avoid disbarment, would openly talk about the merits of my case?" Estrada said.

Estrada was apparently referring to De Vera, one of the private lawyers helping state prosecutors in his plunder case.

The former President also wondered aloud why the Sandiganbayan had not castigated members of the prosecution panel, who had been "revealing to the public the testimonies of witnesses who had yet to take the witness stand."

"Are you afraid of throwing the book at the Ombudsman for saying on radio, print and TV that their case against me for illegal use of an alias is already 60-percent closed?" Estrada said.

And by "intimating (through your spokesperson) that you want live media coverage of my trials, it is clear that you are not interested in protecting my rights but want only that your decisions (are) cheered by those who have already prejudged me," Estrada said.

Leaving fate to people

The deposed President maintained he was "leaving my fate to the Filipino people, who have elected me as their duly constituted President, and to God who is the One True Judge."

Estrada's claim that he is being persecuted by the anti-graft court, the Ombudsman, the Supreme Court and the prosecutors can further inflame emotions.

The former President's supporters have warned of an uprising because of Estrada's alleged unfair treatment.

To defuse the tension, many legislators are supporting Estrada's request that he be allowed to leave for medical treatment in the United States. Others want him exiled.

Speaker Jose de Venecia and former Senate Presidents Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Edgardo Angara and Blas Ople have agreed to adopt back channel methods to help avert a political crisis.

They are seeking ways to convince the Sandiganbayan to allow Estrada to seek medical treatment abroad "without creating ripples of discontent or disagreement."

A member of the team said on Thursday that they would ask Malacañang to intercede.

The first mission of the team is to make Estrada re-embrace the country's judicial system, according to De Venecia.

He said the group would conduct "extensive consultations" before making a "final decision" on what action to take to defuse the crisis.

New consensus

The Speaker said Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin, former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos, civil society and other sectors would be consulted "because the issue requires a new consensus."

"We really have to solve this problem. The first option is to return to the judicial process and then we'll consider other options," De Venecia said. Other options include medical treatment in the United States, he said.

But De Venecia ruled out exile for Estrada, the first President to be charged with plunder.

"Exile we have shot down. We are against it. Erap is against it so it's out of the question," De Venecia told the INQUIRER.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has rejected proposals that she intercede on behalf of Estrada before the Sandiganbayan.

Question of law

"We don't have a choice. Even if some of our allies would think that such solution would be best for the country, we still believe this is a question of law," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said.

Tiglao said only the Sandiganbayan could decide whether Estrada could go abroad.

Saying it was an "insult to the courts," Sen. Joker Arroyo urged Ms Macapagal to defend the Constitution and block any political solutions to the "crisis" created by Estrada.

"What they're trying to do is short-circuit the court proceedings so that Estrada can have a political accommodation. I think that's an insult to the courts," Arroyo said, referring to De Venecia's group.

Senate President Franklin Drilon, and Senators Ramon Magsaysay and Renato Cayetano said that while they welcomed any attempt to defuse the tension, the parameters of this effort must be first defined.

Drilon insisted that the matter of Estrada being able to leave for medical treatment abroad should be left to the Sandiganbayan, without any interference from any political parties.

"This is a matter that is already part of the judicial process. Evidence has been submitted to the Sandiganbayan, so we should let the Sandiganbayan decide on the matter," he said.

For his part, Magsaysay said that any back-channel efforts should be in accordance with the law.

Cayetano said the back-channel approach was improper especially if it was an intrusion into the judicial process.

The best way to solve the impasse involving Estrada is to continue the hearings of his plunder case, according to Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

"Whatever agreement they may hold will not bind the prosecution," Perez said in reaction to the "back channel" discussions.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said Ms Macapagal might as well go abroad with Estrada if she allowed him to go on exile.

PlunderWatch, on the other hand, maintained that the compromise solution reportedly being cooked up by both the administration and opposition parties should "put justice as the No. 1 agenda and political expediency a far second."

Plunderwatch spokesperson Fr. Joe Dizon expressed fear that the Macapagal administration, through De Venecia, might already be seeking ways to bring Estrada out of the country even though his plunder charges had yet to be resolved.

Dizon described the handling of the President and her allies of the "Estrada problem" as fundamentally flawed.

"Apparently, the only crisis that GMA and the politicians are concerned about is the one concerning their political careers. They don't care about the crisis of injustice that will happen once Erap is allowed to leave," he said. ***Reports from Volt Contreras, Juliet Javellana, Blanche S. Rivera, Cynthia D. Balana, Norman Bordadora and Agnes Donato***

Marcos 'son' gets 4 years for HK fraud

From page A1

roughly 160,000 migrant Filipino workers here, Polson said.

His rationale was unclear: There have been no public demonstrations of support for Marcos among the Filipinos, most of them working here as maids.

Evidence in the trial showed that Marcos instructed two men to present the false documents—an insurance certificate for US $54 billion and a custodial safekeeping receipt for US $36 billion—to the British bank HSBC in Hong Kong.

Marcos claimed that the documents were genuine. ***AP***

1. All full-paying passengers (domestic and outbound Manila-Hong Kong flights) traveling from February 4 to July 4, 2002 are qualified to join the raffle.

2. Write your name, address, phone number, and affix your signature, flight date and flight number on the raffle coupon.

3. Drop the raffle coupon in drop boxes located at all Cebu Pacific Pre-Departure Areas, airport & organic ticket offices nationwide.

4. Deadline for submission of entries are as follows:

First Grand Draw:
On or before 12MN on April 28, 2002
Second Grand Draw:
On or before 12MN on July 4, 2002

5. Winners will be drawn on the following dates in the presence of a DTI representative:

First Grand Draw: May 6, 2002
Second Grand Draw: July 11, 2002

6. Raffle draws will be in Cebu Pacific's Airline Operations Center, Terminal I, Domestic Airport, Paranaque, Metro Manila at 5 PM.

7. Winners must present their claim stub and registered mail together with any two (2) of the following valid IDs with picture: School ID, Company ID, TIN Card, SSS Card, Credit Card or Passport.

See posters for more details.

Per DTI Permit No. 0179, series of 2002

MBA opens in Cebu City

THE METROPOLITAN Basketball Association opens its fifth season with an exciting twinbill in Cebu City on April 6. Originally slated in San Fernando, Pampanga, the inaugurals pitting Cagayan de Oro against TPG Davao and Cebuana Lhuillier against Osaka-Pangasinan have to be transferred due to the unavailability of the Bren Guiao Sports Complex.

SPORTS

Editor Al S. Mendoza ⊛ Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

Paralympic meet gets under way

SALT LAKE CITY—Storm clouds draped the snowy Wasatch Mountains as 450 physically challenged athletes from 36 countries officially opened the Paralympic Winter Games on Thursday night. Erik Weihenmayer carried the Olympic flame through the stadium on the final leg of its Journey of Fire and handed the torch to American Paralympic skiers Muffy Davis and Chris Waddell, who lighted the same cauldron that burned through the Winter Olympics

CASINO FILIPINO RP OPEN

Gibson keeps lead; Miñoza 5 shots off

ROMY HOMILLADA

MIÑOZA: "The real battle begins on Sunday."

THE LEADERS:

Rick Gibson (Can)	68-69=137
Greg Hanrahan (USA)	70-68=138
Tony Lascuna (Phi)	71-70=141
Chawalit Plaphol (Tha)	72-70=142
Frankie Miñoza (Phi)	70-72=142
Anthony Kang (Kor)	74-69=143
Pablo del Olmo (Mex)	72-72=144
Kim Sang-ki (Kor)	69-75=144

By Al S. Mendoza

HAS Rick Gibson already given it his best shot? Was Frankie Miñoza simply spotting the field?

Seemingly for both, the answer is yes.

On his last hole yesterday, Gibson saved par from 30 feet on his way to a three-under-par 69 in the Casino Filipino 87th Philippine Open at Wack Wack East.

And the 42-year-old Miñoza matched par 72 with conservative golf to stay five shots behind Gibson at 142. Then he said: "I like where I am. It's anybody's ball game at this stage. The real battle begins on Sunday."

The 40-year-old Gibson, that amiable Manila-based Canadian from Victoria, held a one-shot lead over American Greg Hanrahan at the halfway mark of the P11-million tournament presented by San Miguel Corp. in cooperation with Mitsubishi Motors Philippines.

"I'm more patient than I was three years ago," said Gibson, going 7-under with his 137 after a 68 on opening day. "Thankfully, I'm now putting as solid as I can be."

Right he was.

His five birdies yesterday were from an average of 10 feet.

"My putting is much better than it was some years back," said Gibson, withdrawing from the game for three years before returning in 2000 and making it back to the lucrative Japan Tour this year. "I had a change in my set-up."

The final hole was the so-called icing on the cake for Gibson, who strode out of the 18th green wearing a big grin.

Hitting a 5-wood off the tee on the par-4, 428-yard 18th, Gibson caught the water 170 yards from the green. Undaunted, he planted his 7-iron 30 feet past the hole, then ram home the putt to keep the lead going into the weekend.

"I'll keep on trying to keep my patience, staying on the fairways, hitting as many greens as possible, leaning on my putting as much as I can," said Gibson, whose best finish in seven RP Open stints was third in 1991 at Valley.

The huge putt on 18 capped a blazing birdie-birdie-par windup for the long-time Alabang (Muntinlupa) resident, who was sixth last year behind champion Cassius Casas after finishing seventh in 2000 at Riviera.

The 38-year-old Hanrahan, burning the back nine with a 32 behind four birdies, fired a 68 for 138 in a remarkable recovery from back-to-back bogeys from the eighth.

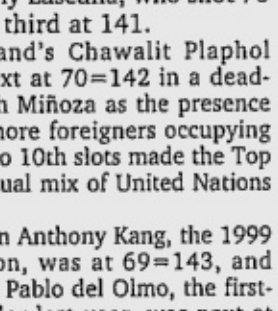
The Connecticut-born Hanrahan, just a shot off Gibson, was three up on Filipino Tony Lascuna, who shot 70 for solo third at 141.

Thailand's Chawalit Plaphol came next at 70=142 in a deadlock with Miñoza as the presence of five more foreigners occupying the 6th to 10th slots made the Top 10 a virtual mix of United Nations colors.

Korean Anthony Kang, the 1999 champion, was at 69=143, and Mexican Pablo del Olmo, the first-day leader last year, was next at 72=144 for solo seventh. Kim JM of Korea was at 73=145 in a tie with Singapore's Lam CB at 75=145 and Taiwan's Hsu MN 75=145.

Angelo Que, last year's low amateur medalist, made 73 after a 69 and saw himself getting paired with Miñoza today in the company of the Plaphol from Thailand.

They tee off at 11:40, 10 minutes ahead of Gibson, Hanrahan and Lascuna in the tournament sponsored by Pagcor, San Miguel Beer, Mitsubishi, Hermie Esguerra, Bingo Bonanza, Jacinto Ng Sr., Waterfront Hotels, Unilab, Antonio Cabangon-Chua, ShoeMart, Marsman Drysdale, Hope, Thai Group, GDP, Bert Bravo's U-Bix, Motorola, Nextel, Taylor Made-adidas, GNC Live Well and Caffe Appassionato.



The winds were moderate yesterday and yet, defending champion Casas got himself blown away in a bitter development as he missed the cut at 152.

Casas shot 72 but his 81 on Thursday brought him down to 153 to join 1997 RP Open runner-up Mars Pucay 82-73=155 among those who missed the cut.

Among those making the cut at 152 were amateurs Juvic Pagunsan (78-74) and Tommy Manotoc (72-80) as only the Top 65 including ties from a field of 159 got into the weekend ride.

Other scorers:

145—Chris Wilson (USA) 73-72, Kim Jong-myung (Kor) 72-73, Saneh Saengsui (Tha) 71-74, Lam Chih Bing (Sin) 70-75, Hsu Mong-nan (Twn), 70-75, Soe Kway Naing (Myn) 70-75

146—Gerry Norquist (USA) 78-68, Kang Wook-soon (Kor) 75-71, Kim Sung-yoon (Kor) 74-72, Danny Chia (Mas) 73-73, Sushi Ishigaki (Jpn) 73-73, Mo Joong-kyung (Kor) 73-73

147—Akio Sadakata (Jpn) 77-70, Aaron Meeks (USA) 75-72, Gerald Rosales (Phi) 74-73, Rhey Luna (Phi) 73-74, Marlon Dizon (Phi) 72-75, Atthaphon P'manee (Tha) 72-75, Jim Johnson (USA) 72-75

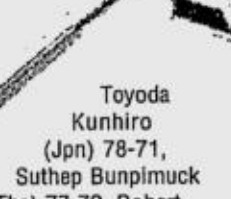
148—James Stewart 75-73, James Oh (Kor) 74-74, Jerome Delariarte (Phi) 73-75, Dominique Boulet (Hkg) 71-77, Kyi Hia Han (Myn) 70-78

149—Toyoda Kunhiro (Jpn) 78-71, Suthep Bunpimuck (Tha) 77-72, Robert Pactolerin (Phi) 77-72, Somkiat Srisanga (Tha) 75-74, Benjie Magada (Phi) 75-74, Joon Choi (Kor) 74-75, Chang Tse-peng (Twn) 74-75, Amandeep Johl (Ind) 74-75, Clay Devers (USA), Tatsuya Shiraishi (Jpn) 73-76, Richie Sinfuego (Phi) 72-77

150—Alex Oh (Kor) 150, Ramon Brobio (Phi) 78-72, Dong Yi (Kor) 77-73, Dan Cruz (Phi) 76-74, Renato Gaviola (Phi) 76-74, Rafael Ponce (Ecu) 76-74, Ted Oh (Kor) 76-74, Chris Rodgers (Eng) 76-74, Michael Wright (Aus) 76-74, Elmer Salvador (Phi) 75-75, Carito Villaroman (Phi) 75-75, Ruben Sasutil (Phi), Jeff Burns (USA) 73-77, Terry Pilkadaris (Aus) 73-77

'Frankie's my bet'

SPECTATOR



Al S. Mendoza

BEN Abalos was deathly worried yesterday when he saw smoke billowing from somewhere in Mandaluyong City. He was standing near the No. 1 tee box of Wack Wack East.

"That smoke is near my mother's house," said Abalos, cell phone close to his ear. "I'm trying to call my mother's house now to check on the fire but nobody's answering."

Minutes later, he was relieved.

"Thank God, it was not my mother's house," he said.

Then, walking toward the clubhouse wearing a smile and whistling a tune, he saw Frankie Miñoza being interviewed by sportswriters covering the Casino Filipino 87th Philippine Open. He stopped to say hello to Frankie.

"Oh, hi, Sir," said Frankie, who had just scored an even-par 72.

"What did I tell you," Ben shot back. "You are my bet. You've always been my bet."

Then Ben walked away, smiling. He winked at me as though saying, "He's going to win it."

■

For the first time in his life, Ed Picson is hitting the sack late at night and then waking up ahead of the crowing roosters of derby champion Rudy Salud. It's been that way the last four days.

Reason? Ed has been orchestrating the TV coverage of the Casino Filipino 87th Philippine Open.

"First time in my life that I've been working my butt off, buddy," he told me yesterday. "The Philippine Open, I tell you, isn't a picnic."

Dashing Tony Sisante of the RP Open's marketing committee saw some footages of the coverage yesterday.

"By golly, I didn't know Ed was that good," said Tony S, sipping red wine. "I can't wait to watch the Open coverage."

Ed's baby will go on air at 2 p.m. on NBN 4 starting today. It will last up to 5 p.m.

And here's the catch. Ed's TV spectacular from 2-5 p.m. tomorrow is through the courtesy of Butch Gamboa, who allowed the RP Open to use his 2-3 p.m. slot on NBN 4. Gladly, Butch moved his durable, well-liked TV show to 5-6 p.m.

"My hat's off to your buddy, Butch," said Ed Picson. "He's really an angel of a friend. If not for him, our TV coverage of the RP Open would amount to nothing."

Indeed, thank you Butch baby. Your act of lending Ed your 2-3 p.m. slot at NBN 4 tomorrow has again reinforced your stature as television's Mr. Gracious Gamboa.

I raise a glass to that.

■

Gerard Cantada, the gallant fourth-placer last year in his rookie stint, need not sulk after he got cut yesterday with his 78-78. Take it from his own father, Boy Cantada.

"He shouldn't feel bitter about it," he said. "It was his choice that he be a teaching pro, not a touring pro. He couldn't have the best of both worlds."

If all fathers were like Boy, we would have a better golf world to live in.

Nestea Beach Volley university tourney on

METRO Manila teams from various colleges and universities start their quest for the P100,000 top prize when the 6th Nestea Beach Volley University Championship starts today at the La Salle Green Hills beach volley sand courts.

Participating schools can only send one team each for the men's and women's divisions, with each group of four playing a round robin format.

Winners get two points, losers one and forfeiting teams zero.

The Top 16 will compete in the elimination rounds through a single elimination system. The top four teams will advance for the championships in Boracay where they will face finalists from Luzon and the Visayas-Mindanao.

Over half a million in prizes are at stake for the finalists, with the champion teams to receive P100,000 each. The schools they represent will also receive P50,000 worth of sports equipment.

After tomorrow's rounds, the next eliminations will be on April 6-7, April 13-14 and April 17-18 in the series supported by Speedo, Mikasa, Asian Spirit, Astring-O-Sol ice, WG&A, Kenny Rogers, Carl's Jr. and Boracay resorts, Boracay Gold Crowne Club and Villa de Oro.

BEACH volleyball action.

Strong putting powers Faxon atop Classic field

CORAL SPRINGS, Florida—Brad Faxon made two 30-foot (9-meter) putts and four more from beyond 10 feet (3 meters) Thursday to shoot a 7-under 65 and become clubhouse leader when heavy rain suspended the opening round of the Honda Classic.

"I try to putt like it's shooting baskets with your friends," Faxon said.

Faxon birdied four of his final five holes, getting off the TPC at Heron Bay just before play was suspended. Nearly 2 inches (5 centimeters) of rain had fallen when the first round was postponed Thursday afternoon.

The round will resume Friday morning. Second-round tee times were pushed back five hours, a move that guarantees the second round will not finish Friday and will continue Saturday.

Friday's forecast called for partly cloudy skies with a 20 percent chance of rain.

Skip Kendall, having teed off on the par-5 16th when play was stopped, was one shot behind Faxon and one stroke ahead of Fulton Allem, Per-Ulrik Johansson, Dudley Hart and Michael Allen.

Only 33 players in the 144-man field finished the opening round. That could benefit Faxon, especially if he keeps playing like he did Thursday.

Faxon has three top-10 finishes this season. He tied for second at the Nissan Open and finished third at the Match Play Championship. He could have won both had it not been for a few missed putts. *AP*

Purefoods routs Selecta, regains solo top spot

GAMES TODAY: (Cuneta Astrodome)
4 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Ginebra
6 p.m.—Red Bull vs Hapee-RP

By June Navarro

BALANGA, Bataan—Derrick Brown and Leonard White again proved to be a lethal combination as Purefoods routed Selecta-RP team, 89-72, and regained the solo leadership last night in the PBA Governors Cup at the Balanga People's Center here.

Brown scattered 25 of his game-high 31 points in the first half as the Hotdogs mounted an attack that more than predicted the outcome of the one-sided encounter.

With Brown throwing his weight around, Purefoods erected what seemed to be an insurmountable 51-33 halftime lead that the Hotdogs sustained en route to their fourth victory in five games.

White, serving as Brown's ever-reliable backup, made his presence felt in the second half just as Brown's firepower started to taper off.

As Brown started to make himself scarce, White carried the Hotdogs at the offensive end as he chipped in 11 of his 23 points in the last 20 minutes of play.

At about that time, the Nationals showed signs of life as Poch Juinio and Asi Taulava tried to lift the Nationals from the ashes.

But the Hotdogs never wavered as they held on to send Selecta-RP Team at the bottom of the standings with four setbacks against a lone victory.

The Hotdogs also played killjoy to the debuting Jimmy Alapag, who was finally allowed to play after securing his clearance from the Department of Justice early this week.

Alapag finished with only one free throw and ended up with a heavily bandaged right hand after only a few minutes of action in the first quarter.

Hapee-RP Team, Selecta-RP's better half in the national training pool, springs back into action today against Batang Red Bull at the Cuneta Astrodome.

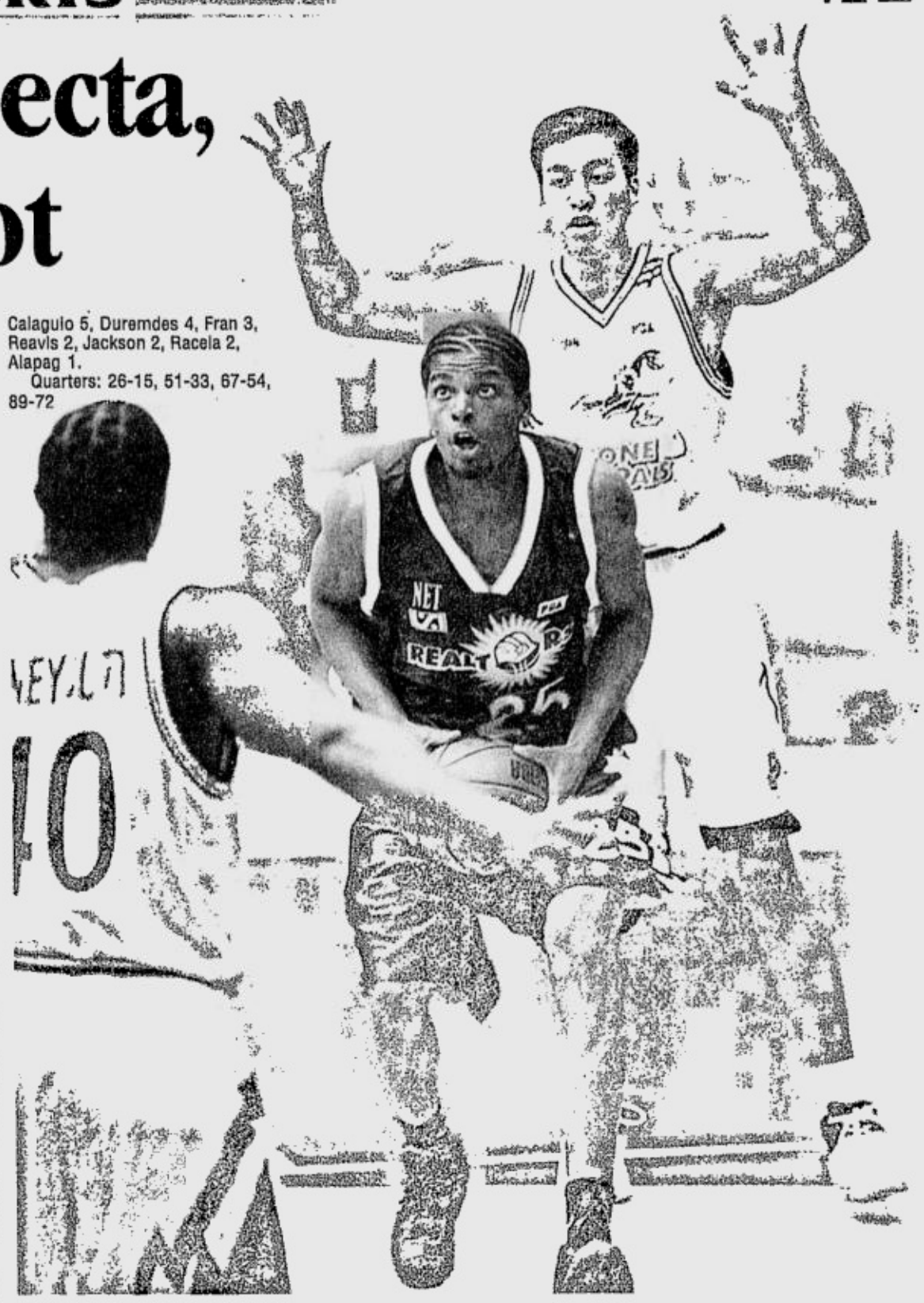
Hapee-RP is on a two-game roll as it registered back-to-back victories against Coca-Cola and Selecta-RP to erase the stigma of its Talk N Text defeat.

Scores:

PUREFOODS 89—Brown 31, White 23, Raymundo 10, Evangelista 7, Magsanoc 6, Patrimonio 6, Yap 2, Balingit 2, Mendiola 0., Guerrero 0.

SELECTA-RP 72—Taulava 22, Juinio 13, Hontiveros 11, Espino 7, Calaguio 5, Duremdes 4, Fran 3, Reavis 2, Jackson 2, Racela 2, Alapag 1.

Quarters: 26-15, 51-33, 67-54, 89-72



STA. Lucia Relaty's Victor Thomas eyes the basket as Talk N Text's Gerald Honeycutt and Mark Telan defend during their PBA game Wednesday night. The Pals won, 98-96. ROMY HOMILLADA

ICTSI boosts PBL lineup

By Dennis Eroa

INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services Inc-La Salle, which came within a win of making the PBL Challenge Cup finals in its first try, reinforced its lineup in another determined bid to upstage the favorites in the President's Cup slated on April 3 at the Makati Coliseum.

Defensive specialist Francis Zamora, formerly of Welcoat and Montaña, will boost the Green Archers' frontline. The 6-foot-5 Zamora is among the league's leaders in rebounding.

Fil-Am Lorenz Albano, son of former Letran and national cage team mentor Larry, adds sting to ICTSI's backcourt, while Mark Magsumbol of St. Benilde will help swingman BJ Manalo, Rommel Daep and Mike Cortez in providing the firepower.

The 5-foot-9 Albano played for Hunter College and is expected to relieve Cortez, who capped a sterling year by winning rookie of the year honors from the PBL Press Corps. Manalo has recovered fully from a foot injury and will shoot the lights out of the coliseum.

ICTSI lost gunner Alvin Castro to the pros. Coach Franz Pumaren, winner of four UAAP straight UAAP championships, transformed ICTSI into a highly defensive team which turns turnovers into big points.

"The team's going to flash the same never-say-die attitude which it showed in its rookie conference," said team manager Manny Salgado. ICTSI lost to eventual champion Shark Energy Drink in the Final Four of the Challenge Cup.

A tested hardworker, Zamora, a PBA free agent, will be reunited with his fellow Green Archers. He won two UAAP championship rings while playing for La Salle.

Meanwhile, Ateneo-Pioneer will make the first pick in the rookie draft on Monday at the Makati Coliseum. The draft starts at 1 p.m.

Mavs hand Raptors 13th straight loss; Barry 3-pointer lifts Pistons

MICHAEL Finley of Dallas (left) defies the blocking arm of Toronto's Vince Carter. AP

DALLAS—Dirk Nowitzki scored 35 points, Michael Finley had 25 and Steve Nash added 19 as Dallas ripped Toronto, 122-103, dealing the Raptors their 13th straight loss to become the first team with 43 wins in the NBA on Thursday night.

At 43-18, Dallas is in a virtual tie with Sacramento for the best record in the NBA. The Kings (42-17) have a slightly better winning percentage, .712 to .705. The Los Angeles Lakers are fighting for the top seed in the West, too, at 42-18 (.700).

Finley, Nowitzki and Nash showed why they're known as the team's Big Three by combining to score 29 of the Mavs' 33 points in the third quarter. Nash and Nowitzki had 10 each and Finley added nine.

Pistons 95, Wizards 92

In Washington, Jon Barry made a 3-point shot from the left corner at the full-time buzzer to give the Detroit Pistons a 95-92 victory over the Washington Wizards.

Barry, wide open in the corner, took the pass from Damon Jones, sent in the shot and mouthed "Go home, go home" to the crowd as the Pistons celebrated.

Barry's basket accounted for the only points by the Pistons in the final four minutes. After being down 92-85, the Wizards tied it on Courtney Alexander's acrobatic reverse layup with 1:42 remaining.

Corliss Williamson scored 23 points and Jerry Stackhouse had 19 for the Pistons, who started the day just percentage points ahead of the Milwaukee Bucks in the Central Division. Barry had 13 points on 4-for-4 shooting.

Grizzlies 122, Pacers 111

In Memphis, Tennessee, Jason Williams, playing his first game since Feb. 19, scored 33 points and handed out 11 assists as the Grizzlies had a rare offensive outburst.

Seven Grizzlies finished in double figures as Memphis snapped an eight-game losing streak and set a franchise record for points scored in regulation. The win was their first over Indiana in franchise history after 13 losses.

Spurs 99, Rockets 97

In San Antonio, Tim Duncan had a double-double by halftime and finished with 30 points and 16 rebounds to lead San Antonio over Houston.

Rookie Tony Parker added 16 points and a career-high 10 rebounds, while Malik Rose scored 14 and David Robinson grabbed 12 rebounds.

Complete Results

Detroit 95, Washington 92; Memphis 122, Indiana 111; San Antonio 99, Houston 97; Denver 104, New York 93; Dallas 122, Toronto 103; Seattle 92, Charlotte 89, OT. AP

MJ return depends on Wizards' fate

NBA NOTES

Henry Liao

RENOWNED for his competitiveness, injured Washington star Michael Jordan may return to the Wizards sooner than expected but that's only if his NBA club remains in contention for one of the eight playoff spots in the Eastern Conference when it completes a grueling seven-game road trip on March 24.

The 39-year-old Jordan underwent arthroscopic surgery on Feb. 27 to repair torn cartilage in his right knee. He was placed on the injured list for only the second time in his distinguished pro tenure (the first came in 1985 when he fractured his left foot while with the Chicago Bulls).

According to Wizards physician Dr. Stephen Haas, Jordan's injury was the result of normal wear and tear for an athlete of his caliber. Normally, such an operation requires two to six weeks of rehabilitation.

Assuming it takes Jordan four weeks to recover, he would miss 16 games, including a seven-game road sojourn against the LA Clippers (Mar. 13), Seattle SuperSonics (Mar. 15), Portland Trail Blazers (Mar. 16), Golden State Warriors (Mar. 18), Denver Nuggets (Mar. 20), Utah Jazz (Mar. 21) and Toronto Raptors (Mar. 24). With the exception of Golden State and Denver, all are still in the thick of a playoff hunt.

The Wizards management is cautiously optimistic that Jordan could return sometime during the extended road trip. Coach Doug Collins said the five-time NBA MVP will probably miss at least eight more games starting with today's encounter at Orlando.

So far, Jordan has missed five games—including yesterday's 95-92 home contest against Detroit—since his surgery and the Wizards have gone 2-3 without him. Overall this season, Washington is 2-5 sans His Airness, who also sat out earlier games against San Antonio and Detroit to rest his injured knee.

The other Wizards will have to hold the fort while Jordan is on a sabbatical. His supporting cast, from veterans Richard Hamilton, Chris Whitney, Christian Laettner, Popeye Jones, Hubert Davis, Jahidi White and Courtney Alexander to rookies Kwame Brown and Brandan Haywood, must step up.

The "Jordanaires" need to pick up a number of victories any way they can to keep their playoff hopes alive during MJ's absence.

Undoubtedly, Jordan's decision to return this season will depend heavily on the Wizards, postseason chances. If the Wiz fall far behind in the playoff race by late March, Jordan would likely maximize his rehabilitation and just come back to the team next season.

Through the All-Star break, Washington was 26-21. Since then, it has gone 3-10, including a seven-game losing streak—five of which came when Jordan was still playing despite incessant pain in his right knee.

The losing spell was broken on Mar. 3 when the Wizards outlasted the visiting Orlando Magic, 107-102, in overtime. With Jordan and Hamilton (stomach virus) out, Alexander got a rare start at shooting guard and took advantage of the opportunity. The 6-6 Alexander, a second-year pro who had been in Collins' doghouse for much of the season, torched Tracy McGrady and the Magic for a season-high 32 points. Actually it was a collective team effort as Whitney added 20 points, Jones had 10 points and 12 rebounds and Laettner contributed 12 markers, eight boards and a season-high nine assists.

In Washington's next game on Mar. 5, the Wizards won again at the MCI Center, beating Jordan's old employer Chicago, 115-90, behind Alexander's 26 points on 9-for-11 field shooting.

Go hits Jalasco's 'continued POC membership'

By Marc Anthony Reyes

PHILIPPINE Amateur Track and Field Association president Go Teng Kok yesterday criticized the Philippine Olympic Committee for the "continued membership" of Freddie Jalasco in the POC executive board although he no longer has any national sports association to represent.

Go lamented the fact that the POC charter doesn't have any provision limiting the membership of executive board members that could be applied to Jalasco, who has been replaced last year as chief of the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

He stressed that the POC should follow the International Olympic Committee charter which states that the election of each IOC member as president of international federation, national Olympic committee or continental associations is linked to their function as IOC member.

GO TENG KOK

However, POC president Celso Dayrit countered that the POC can't just terminate Jalasco's term because his election as BAP chief is not synchronized with his assumption as POC executive board member since NSAs don't hold their elections in accordance to that of the POC.

Dayrit said Jalasco can only be taken out of the executive board if "he is deemed undesirable by the general assembly."

Also, Dayrit said that not all IOC members have an NOC to represent and that executive board members—qualified through age limit only — are even allowed to finish their terms even if they reach the required age.

The POC head also cited that case of former POC president Rene Cruz, who finished his term even after he was replaced as president of the Philippine Badminton Association.

But Go said Cruz's situation is different because Jalasco is not POC president and that nobody dared to question Cruz's reign from among the POC members.

Instead, Go singled out the case of former POC second vice president Godofredo Camacho, who was replaced as president of the volleyball association and only retained his POC post after being named chief of the gymnastics body.

Go insisted that there is no reason why Jalasco will stay with the powerful executive board when the POC itself rules that he can't participate in any voting process.

The POC general assembly convenes March 21.

ATP CLASSIC

Ferreira shocks Sampras

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona—Wayne Ferreira beat Pete Sampras for the sixth time in his career, ousting the third seed from the $400,000 ATP Scottsdale Classic 7-5, 7-5 here on Thursday.

The misery at the high-altitude desert venue continued for Sampras, who has never advanced beyond the second round here in five appearances. South Africa's Ferreira stands 6-6 lifetime against the American and is proud of it.

"It has been great. I've had the most success against him of any major player," said Ferreira, into his third quarter-final of the season. "It's a wonderful thing to have beaten Sampras six times.

"I can tell my grandchildren about it."

The loss left Sampras in a quandary over his game with the first Masters Series event of the season starting Monday at Indian Wells, California.

"I struggle a bit in this altitude," admitted the 30-year-old, seven-time Wimbledon winner. "The ball goes a few feet farther than you would like. It doesn't help my serve.

"I always struggle out there to play my game. I can't seem to break through here, but that's the nature of Scottsdale. You have to deal with the conditions. I played too cautious. You cannot afford to do that."

Ferreira and Sampras traded breaks in the first set before the South African got the edge with a break to love in the 11th game. A love service game wrapped up the set for the South African.

In a rare fit of temper, Sampras smacked the ball out of the stadium after the break.

A few points in the second decided the match as the American saved two break points before dropping serve 5-6. Ferreira served it out on his first match point.

"I like to play against him," said Ferreira. "He's a little down right now, we've all been through it. He had so many good years, it's really frustrating."

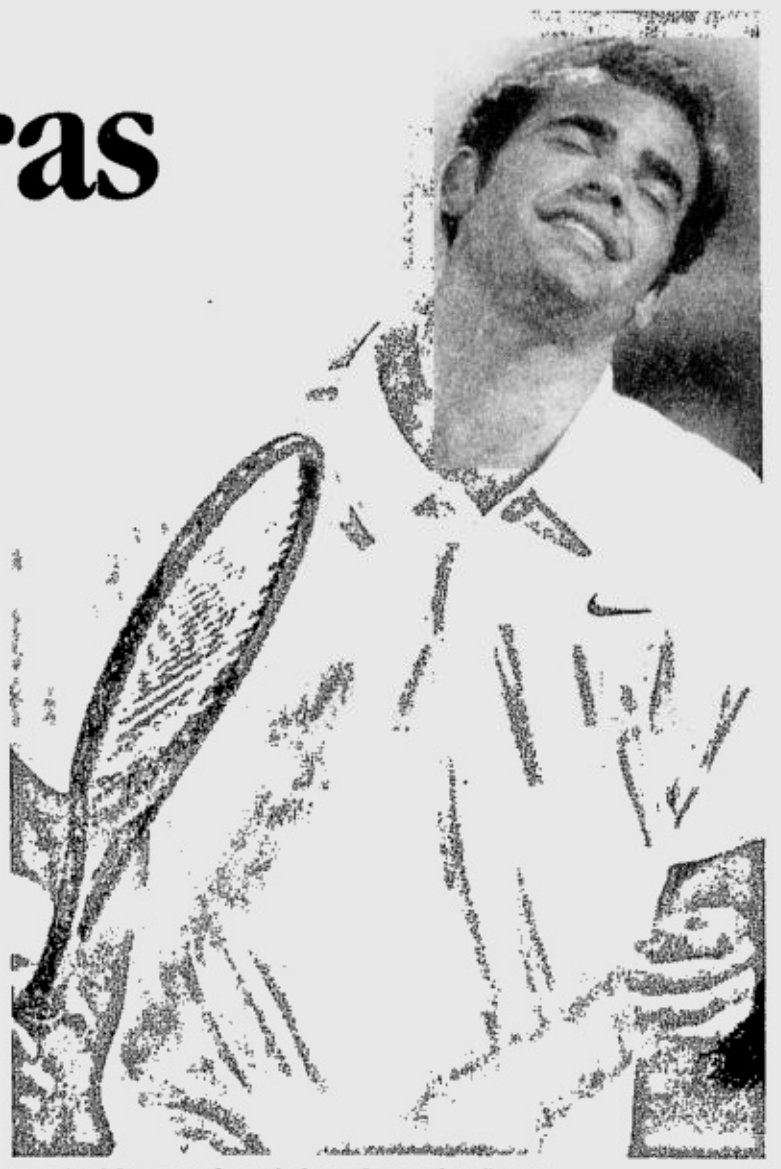
Seventh seed Xavier Malisse made a late charge in a tie-breaker, winning to the last six points to advance over Italy's Andrea Gaudenzi 7-5, 7-6 (8/6).

German Rainer Schuettler, the current globe-trotter of the ATP with a round-trip from middle America to Dubai and back to the Far West, moved into the last eight over Spain's Felix Mantilla 6-0, 2-6, 6-1.

Schuettler, winner of the Hong Kong title last autumn, has followed a gruelling schedule the past two weeks, travelling from Copenhagen to Memphis, Dubai in the Gulf and back-tracking to Scottsdale — all in four weeks.

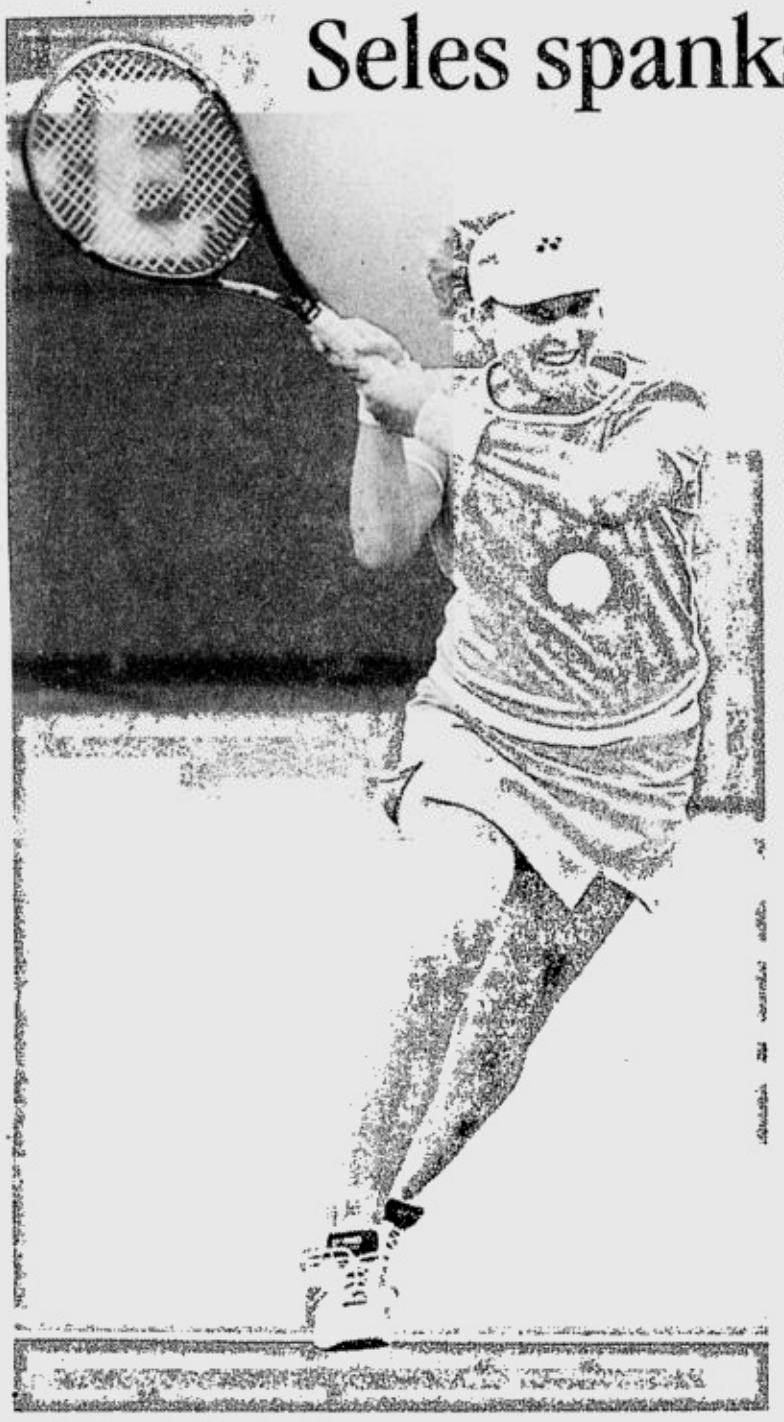
The long flights must have made some sense, with the German playing in his fourth quarter-final in as many weeks. Schuettler stands fifth in the season-long Champions points race.

Carlos Moya, last week's Acapulco champion on clay, won a battle between Spaniards, stopping Fernando Vicente 2-6, 6-2, 6-2. *AFP*



SAMPRAS reacts after missing a shot against Ferreira. AP

Seles spanks Russian teener



SELES slams a backhand to Sharapova. AP

INDIAN WELLS, California — Monica Seles, the 1992 champion at Indian Wells, began her bid for another title with a 6-0, 6-2 victory Thursday over 14-year-old Russian Maria Sharapova.

The fourth-seeded Seles, 28, raced through the first set in 23 minutes of the second-round match in the Pacific Life Open.

She struggled slightly in the opening game, going to deuce on her serve four times before holding with a forehand winner, then lost only seven points the remainder of the first set.

The slender, powerful Sharapova regrouped briefly in the second set.

But Seles regained control by breaking serve with a backhand winner to go up 4-2. She closed it out with another service break that came on a long overhead and long backhand by Sharapova.

Seles, who ran her record to 18-4 in six tournaments this year, hit 20 winners and committed 18 unforced errors.

Sharapova, who had made her tour debut a day earlier with a victory over Brie Rippner, had 13 winners and 30 errors against Seles.

Earlier in the day, sixth-seeded Meghann Shaughnessy beat Martina Muller 6-2, 6-4.

Muller, ranked 13th in the world, hadn't played on the tour since losing to Nicole Pratt in the second round of the Australian Open in mid-January. Shaughnessy also took time off after the Australian Open, returning to play in Scottsdale, Arizona, last week.

In another match at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden, Katarina Srebotnik of Slovenia began her bid for a third straight finals appearance by beating Kristina Brandi, who retired with a chronic right wrist strain after losing the first set 6-2.

Srebotnik, No. 60 this week after finishing last season at No. 98, won last week's clay-court event in Acapulco, Mexico, and lost in the final at Bogota, Colombia, the week before.

Amy Frazier outlasted qualifier Nuria Lagostera Vives of Spain 3-6, 6-3, 6-3; qualifier Virginie Razzano of France beat former French Open champion Iva Majoli 7-6 (5), 6-1, and Anna Smashnova of Israel defeated American Melissa Middleton, 6-4, 6-3. *AP*

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: ACC Tournament, Quarterfinal #3 at 8 a.m., Big East Tournament, Quarterfinal #3 at 11 a.m., Quarterfinal #4 at midnight, Semifinal #1 tomorrow at 2:30 a.m., Semifinal #2 tomorrow at 5 a.m. on ESPN

NBA Inside Stuff at 8 a.m. (r – 6 p.m.) on Star Sports

NBA - Toronto Raptors vs Miami Heat at 8:30 a.m. (r – 6:30 p.m.), Charlotte Hornets vs Sacramento Kings at 11 a.m. (r – 9 p.m.) on Star Sports, Indiana Pacers vs Memphis Grizzlies at 2:30 p.m. (r) on ESPN

NBA Action at 2 p.m. (r) on ESPN

GOLF: PGA Honda Classic, Second Round at 2 p.m. (r – 11:30 p.m.) on Star Sports

BILLIARDS: 2001 Sudden Death 7-Ball at 8 p.m. on ESPN

Schedules subject to change without prior notice

Senador upsets Garma, bags title

SAN FERNANDO, La Union—National Master Emmanuel Senador saved his best for last, scoring a giant upset victory over IM Chito Garma in the ninth and final round to capture the title in the 2002 La Union Chess Championship at the Marcos Bldg., in San Fernando City.

Playing black, Senador held his own against the veteran Garma with his masterful handling of the Sicilian-Dragon opening en route to the title and his first major championship for the year. Garma was the prohibitive favorite going into last Thursday's final round after wresting the lead after the eighth round.

Senador and Grandmaster Joey Antonio, the top board player in the Mandaluyong City Chess Team, actually finished in a tie with 7.5 points apiece, but Senador captured the crown by virtue of a superior tiebreak score.

Senador and Antonio, however, split the combined champion's purse and went home with P40,000 each at the end of the NCFP-sanctioned tournament sponsored by the provincial government of La Union and city government of San Fernando in cooperation with Villa Estrella Resort, Bauang Private Power Corp., and PLDT, San Fernando City.

"Malaking bagay ito para sa akin dahil kahit papaano bumalik ang kumpiyansa ko sa laro ko," said Senador.

GM Eugene Torre settled for third place and ended up tied with Garma (4th), Edgar Villavieja (5th), Jerome Balico (6th), NM Erwin Carag (7th) and Dino Ballecer (8th) with similar seven points.

Torre agreed to a draw with Balico in the ninth round. Villavieja upset NM Andrew Vasquez, while Carag defeated fellow NM Rolly Martinez and Ballecer topped NM Roberto Suelo Jr. They won P9,000 each.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1992, Danilo Pila and Camoy Palahang beat Michael Walker and Paul Ricar, 7-6 (7-5), 6-3, to win the doubles title of the 1992 ITF Philippine Satellite at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center. Also today in 1987, Manny Tolentino and Rod Rafael scored a 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 victory to rule the Singha Open '87 doubles plum in Bangkok.

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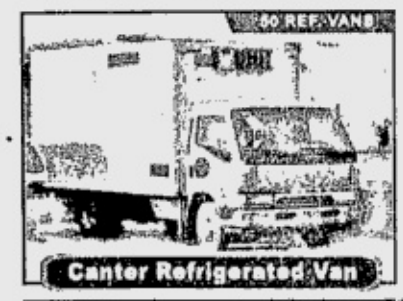

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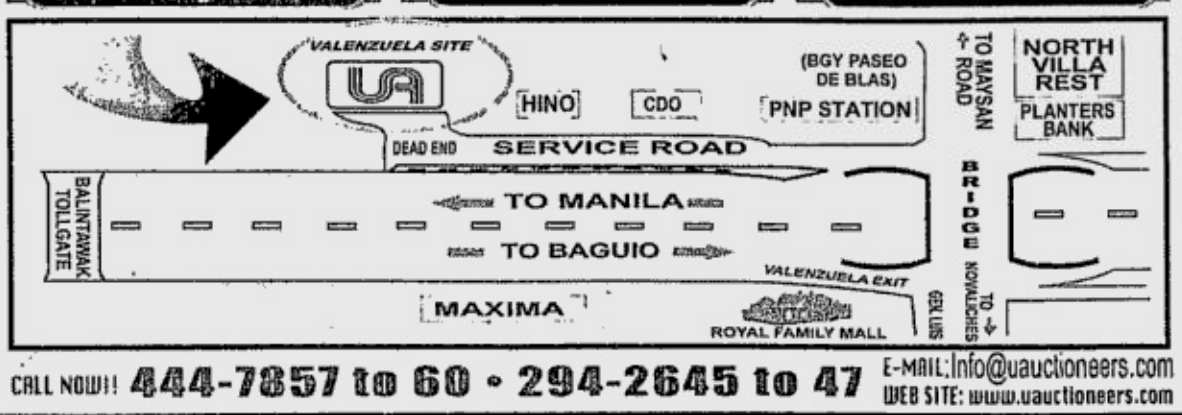

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Korean baseball coach sacked for making players run naked

SEOUL—A South Korean school baseball coach was sacked Friday for forcing young players to run naked in freezing weather after losing games, officials said.

School investigators said the coach forced five players to jog naked for 10 minutes on the streets outside Daesong elementary school in the southern city of Gwangju to punish them for losing several games in a row.

The 35-year-old coach reportedly claimed the boys aged between nine and 13 needed to "boost their mental power and teamwork".

He was dismissed for unacceptable behavior. *AFP*

'Sagupaan' unfolds March 15

A BONUS of P20,000 and a big trophy await the participant who will win the coveted "fastest kill" award, a sidelight of the upcoming Sagupaan Bigtime 5-Cock Invitational Derby on March 15 (Friday) at the Pampanga Coliseum, San Fernando City.

According to derby host and *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio, the Fastest Kill award is keenly targeted by serious breeders since this is a proof of their success in producing the finest battlebirds.

In last year's Sagupaan Invitational 5-Stag Derby, Jimmy Mariquit of Angeles City won the said award when his bet won in seven seconds. Mariquit fought the same bird in Mandaluyong Coliseum and also won in ten seconds.

At stake in the derby sponsored by Sagupaan Hammer Dewormer and Sagupaan B-50 Forten is a whopping guaranteed prize of P0.7 million.

Submission of weights is on the day of the derby. Derby starts at 4 p.m. since more than 90 fights are lined up. For other inquiries, please contact 845-3445.

GOLF WINNERS

Winners of the three-day Manila tournament staged by the San Jose (California) Goin' Bananas golfers received their prizes during the awarding ceremony last night. From left are: Mike Miles, Lito Reyes, Bernie Sang low gross champion; starlet KC Castillo, Ben Retuta, class B titlist; starlet Ruby Padilla, Rico Medina, Ray del Rosario, class A champion; Bill Pizarro, Hansen Viray and Norman Viray, team captain. The visiting golfers also competed in the recent PAL Interclub.

Lewis applies for fight license in Washington

LEWIS

WASHINGTON—Lennox Lewis has applied for a boxing license with the Boxing and Wrestling Commission here, the strongest sign yet that the United States capitol will land his scheduled June 8 fight with Mike Tyson.

Representatives of Lewis and the fight promoters met here Thursday to talk about the bout. Lewis has not visited Detroit or Memphis, the top rival bidders for the planned heavyweight boxing championship showdown.

"It was an exploratory meeting and it went OK," Main Events spokesman Donald Tremblay told the Washington Post.

Lewis, 39-2, was to have defended his International Boxing Federation and World Boxing Council crowns against Tyson next month in Las Vegas. But Tyson started a brawl at a news conference and was not granted a license to fight in Nevada.

Since then, nearly a dozen cities have made pitches for the bout, including Detroit and Memphis, both with large casinos nearby that could benefit from the projected 150 million dollar mega-fight.

The big stumbling block is whether or not Washington's boxing commission will grant Tyson a license to fight when it meets here Tuesday night.

Subic jet ski tourney today

CALTEX Phils. will stage a jet ski slalom competition today as part of the whole-day affair launching of its new product—Super Outboard 3, at the Subic Yacht Club in Subic Freeport.

Paul Familara, product category manager of PCMO and Outboard Oil, has invited Caltex distributors and motoring media in the affair dubbed as "Best for Jet Ski Launch" to personally test the efficiency and quality of Super Outboard 3 in jet ski and speedboats to be provided by the Subic Yacht Club Motorsports.

A race clinic will be conducted by veteran jet ski rider Joey Millionado for the participants before the slalom competition.

"The slalom competition is just a timely launch for our new product, the Super Outboard 3, for the coming summer season. And our Caltex distributors and motoring media will personally see the proof of performance of the said product through the slalom competition," said Familara.

RC races set at Connecticut

RC cars enthusiasts try to outdo each other in the Connecticut Speedway Mini RC Race today (March 9) at 7 p.m. at the Connecticut Speedway Indoor track, mezzanine of design Mix Center, 59 Connecticut St. Greenhills, San Juan.

Only RC racers with 1/28 Kyosho Mini-2 touring cars, 1/24 Kyosho Mini-2 Formula 1 cars and 1/18 HPI Micro RS4 cars are qualified to join this bi-monthly event sponsored by Fatboy Joe Racing, Audiophile Components Inc. and accord savings Bank Inc.

"It will be a whole night of fun and exciting racing event. In fact, RC cars enthusiasts from Olongapo, Pampanga and Laguna have signified their intentions to join the event," said Connecticut Speedway organizer Sonny Yalung.

Deadline for registration will be until 6:30 p.m. today. For further details, please visit the website at www.conencticutspeedway.com or e-mail your registration at info@connecticutspeedway.com.

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Race 4—1. Far Out 2. Arigato 3. Adam's Call 4. Padron Real 5. Rainmaker
Race 5—1. Mica's Magic 2. Halo Effect 3. High and Mighty 4. T Square
Race 6—1. Standing Ovation 2. Tayp Ko Yan
Race 7—1. Easy Rider 2. Born Perfect 3. Dance In the Wind 4. Eden's Quest 5. Bright Star
Race 8—1. Sparkling Sky 2. High Roller 3. Gemstone
Race 9—1. Air Love 2. Thunder Speed 3. Jhelen 4. Redding Drive 5. Alert One
Race 10—1. Gold Pyramid 2. Aya's Dream 3. My Indy 4. Hurry Prince
Race 11—1. Be Ready 2. Union City Boy 3. Lady Victoria 4. Bright Task 5. Gambatte
Race 12—1. Silver Gray 2. Ang Seaman 3. Traktora 4. Flying Indy
Race 13—1. Ocean Friend 2. Ebony Starr 3. Happy Return 4. Profit Margin 5. Bardagul

RP boxers win three opening bouts

BAKU, Azerbaijan—Team Caltex Philippines won three of its four fights in its international boxing debut this year with Romeo Brin, Violito Payla and Anthony Igusquiza pulling off convincing victories in the Prof. Anwar Chowdhry Cup on Wednesday here.

Two-time Olympian Brin of Puerto Princesa scored the most impressive win to lead the Filipinos' charge at the Olympic Sports Center.

Igusquiza of Kalibo, Aklan and Payla of Cagayan de Oro did almost the same to more than made up for the controversial loss of compatriot Vincent Palicte against a top-ranked bet from one of the two host teams in this 27-nation slugfest.

"Not bad considering the fact that this is only our first international exposure. We've just learned that most of the competitors here are already on their third international stint so we're the tournament underdog," said Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines Chairman Emeritus Mel Lopez.

Lopez, who is head of the team being coached by Gregorio Caliwan and Nolito Velasco, was more satisfied with the performance of Brin in disposing Yusopbekov Muzaf of Malaysia.

Brin, 29, and a veteran of the 1996 and 2000 Olympics, upped his win-loss ring record to 101-90 with a mean but neat dukeout with Muzaf, who both Caliwan and Velasco suspect as a Russian import by Malaysia.

But Malaysian or not, Brin gamely engaged his rival in a toe-to-toe duel for four rounds while delivering the most lethal connections for the needed points to advance into the 63.5-kilogram quarterfinals.

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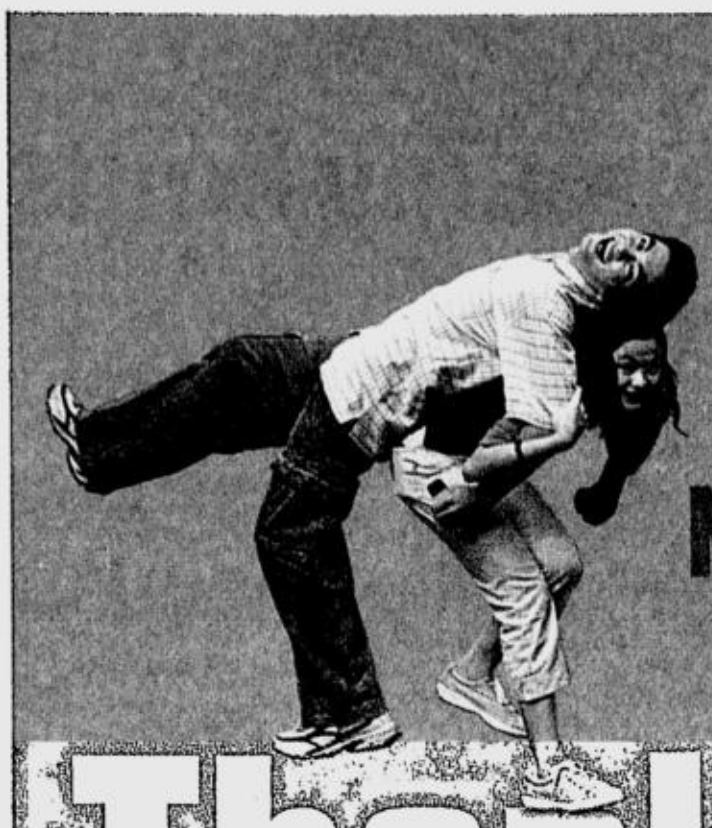

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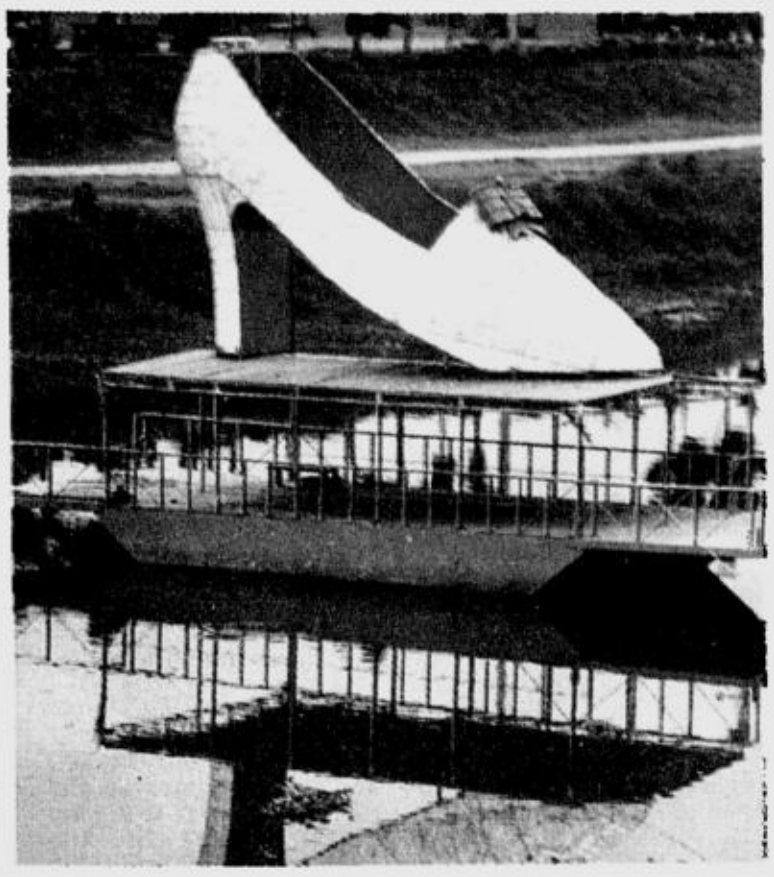

MADE IN MARIKINA
A giant shoe on a barge in the middle of the Marikina River is a sure eyecatcher as well as a constant reminder of the efforts of local officials to revive the city's standing as the shoe capital of the Philippines. DENNIS SABANGAN

Mayors go after vandals

Abalos also cracks down on pranksters

By Christian V. Esguerra

AFTER their ambitious campaign to crack the whip on traffic violators, the mayors of Metro Manila are now zeroing in on vandals and prank callers.

Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. announced the new crackdown.

Emerging from a meeting with the mayors on Thursday, Abalos announced that members of the MMDA executive committee agreed to adopt similar ordinances to rid the metropolis of pranksters and vandals.

Violators would face huge fines and imprisonment, Abalos told reporters.

The MMDA chair said the new policy would concentrate on pranksters who clog hotlines, especially the phone lines of the police, hospitals, and key government agencies.

Asked if the MMDA has the technology to go after these pranksters, Abalos said "there would always be a way to identify them."

Mayors will impose stiff penalties on vandals who have been a perennial problem, particularly in the cities of Caloocan and Manila, according to the MMDA head.

Abalos did not say how local authorities would go after these vandals who usually strike in the wee hours.

In Caloocan City alone, the massive pillars supporting the Light Rail Transit stations and connected by concrete plant boxes are a common object of vandalism.

The city government recently had the area repainted, but vandals returned just a few days later.

Manila bent on recovering 'crown jewels'

By Jerome Aning

MANILA mayor Lito Atienza yesterday directed the city's legal officer to study possible legal measures for the recovery of the city's crown jewels—pieces of prime property that were taken away by decree without any compensation during the martial law years.

These include Rizal Park, the Rizal Memorial sports complex, the Manila harbors, several pieces of property in Intramuros and other buildings and real estate originally titled to the city government, which were allegedly "taken away by or transferred to the national government without the consent of the city," Atienza said.

He said that because the city was not compensated, city officials believe that the action of the national government at that time was "unjust and confiscatory."

"We urgently need these properties for our own development planning and we will exhaust all legal options available to us to get them back," the mayor said.

In a directive to city legal officer Melchor Monsod, he said legal remedies that should be considered were the filing of cases in the proper courts for the recovery of the "lost" properties or proposing appropriate legislation to Congress.

Monsod has already formed a team of lawyers to conduct an exhaustive study of the city's legal options and to prepare the necessary cases for filing before the proper courts, according to the mayor.

Atienza expressed confidence that the city would get a favorable ruling from the courts, either for recovery or compensation, since the city stands on "solid legal grounds."

He pointed out that under the law, the national government has to pay compensation when it expropriates property from its rightful owner, and due process has to be observed in doing so.

"In our case, there was no due process and the city was never compensated," he said.

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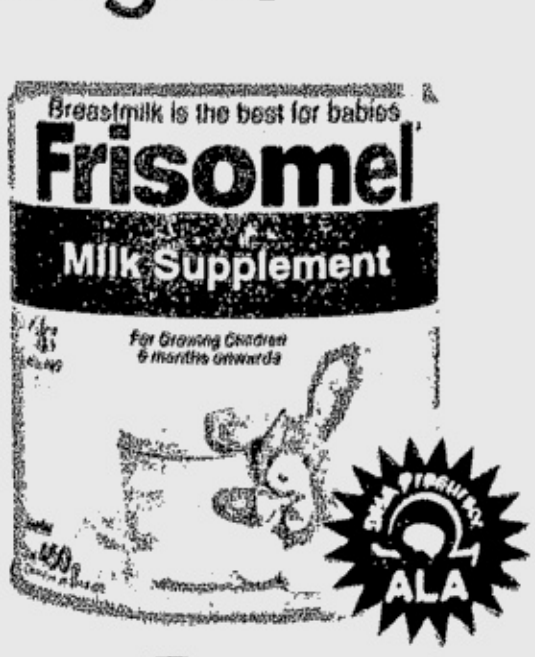

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3,000 south Metro homeowners hit housing agencies

By Romulo O. Ponte
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

ABOUT 3,000 homeowners from 38 subdivisions in Laguna, Cavite and Muntinlupa City—many of whom are former squatters from Manila—are set to go back to the streets if government fails to help them save their low-cost homes.

Eva B. Pallones, president of the Sagip Tahanan at Kabuhayan ng Laguna Inc. (STKLI), said that in a meeting with member-presidents of the 38 subdivisions on Thursday, they resolved to appeal once more for assistance from government and private agencies to save the homes of their members—numbering about 15,000 residents.

The STKLI are now trying to negotiate with the lending agencies, like the National Home Mortgage Finance Corp. or Pag-ibig Fund, Social Security System, Government Service Insurance System and Armed Forces of the Philippines Retirement Security and Benefits System.

They want the agencies to remove the penalty on the homeowners' irregular payments of monthly amortization due to valid reasons, reduce exorbitant interests and remove the arrears; lower the monthly amortization; stop foreclosure proceedings and scrap litigation fees imposed by the NHMFC, RSBS, SSS, GSIS; repeal Republic Act 8501 which provides that nonpayment within six months would mean ejection; and return to the rightful/original owners those units sold by NHMFC to other buyers.

Pallones said most of the residents who are in danger of being evicted by government and loaning agencies live in Laguna, Cavite, and Muntinlupa City.

The homeowners have resided in their units for at least four to eleven years.

The STKLI president said their group appealed that they be allowed to settle their accounts on a P1,000 monthly payment basis because many homeowners have lost their jobs due to the economic crisis which has badly affected the country.

Pallones also cited that some of the residents who are overseas contract workers have been banned from going back abroad due either to old age or sickness, while some breadwinners just do not earn enough to meet the daily needs of their families, let alone pay for the amortization of their houses.

"We are not asking to be freed from our monthly obligations to our housing loan agencies," Pallones said. "We do not want to be a burden to anybody, especially to our government. We are just appealing that our monthly amortization be reduced to an amount which we can afford, until such time that we are through with the crisis."

The homeowners expressed hope that the government's Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council under Secretary Mike Defensor will help them in their appeal.

Defensor allegedly promised them last year that "nobody will lose their homes."

"You can stay there while I do something to lower your payments," Defensor allegedly said.

Ex-first lady blocks flyover construction

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

THE SANDIGANBAYAN will just be playing into the hands of former President Erap if it cites him for contempt for repeatedly attacking the credibility of the anti-graft court.

Erap wants the Sandiganbayan to hold him in contempt so he'll look even more pitiful to his followers, the masa. A person held in contempt is either jailed or fined or both jailed and fined at the court's discretion.

So, how can the anti-graft court jail Erap when he's already in jail?

* * *

Erap will probably stage a hunger strike inside his cozy suite at the Veterans Memorial Hospital.

The hunger strike, however, will not last a day. Erap has an insatiable appetite for food and you know what, he's a glutton.

As presidential spokesman Rigoberto Tiglao said: *"Medyo mahirap siyang hindi kumain* (It will be quite hard for him to miss meals)."

* * *

Erap's former aide told me his boss took numerous meals in a day when he was president. His meals consisted of breakfast; after-breakfast snacks; before-lunch snacks; lunch; after-lunch snacks; merienda proper; before-dinner snacks; dinner; taking *pulutan* (finger food) during drinking sessions with friends; late-night snacks.

Erap's hunger strike, if it will push through, will last for only an hour. A glutton will die if you deprive him of food even for a day.

However, the government should take him seriously if Erap said he might die of loneliness as a result of his long incarceration.

* * *

Erap, according to his friends, is a very congenial person. He can't last being alone in one day; he has to have a talking companion.

When he was still mayor, sometimes Erap had a hard time going to sleep at night. So, according to a close friend, the former actor would try to induce sleep by talking with *istambays* at a street corner near his home.

If he dies during incarceration as a result of loneliness, who do you think will be blamed?

* * *

The Macapagal-Arroyo administration should consider—of course, with the approval of the Sandiganbayan—sending him on exile.

The government can make his travel to the United States for a knee surgery as excuse.

When Erap is already in the United States he will not return. He will most probably delay his return to the country by making all sorts of excuses, like seeking asylum.

* * *

Why is it important for Erap to be sent on exile?

For pragmatic and practical reasons, as a Malacañang official said.

Out of jail and in the United States, Erap's call on his millions of followers to stage destabilization moves against the government will not be as effective as when he's in jail. He wins thousands of symphatizers by the day, in addition to his hardcore followers, with his projection that he's an underdog.

For the sake of national unity, Erap should be sent on exile.

* * *

Construction of a proposed flyover at the intersection of the Tagaytay City public market and the road heading toward Sta. Rosa, Batangas, cannot get off the ground because some elite city residents don't want it.

The flyover will ease traffic in that intersection. The place is congested on weekends when vacationers come to Tagaytay City, which has the cool climate of Baguio City. The city is just two hours' drive from Manila.

Former First Lady Amelita "Ming" Ramos and her rich friends, according to sources, are opposing the project because the flyover would obstruct the view of Taal Lake from their mansions.

* * *

But the flyover is needed as traffic at the busy intersection has become more messy every year, city residents and officials argue.

They said that if the traffic problem at the Tagaytay crossroads is not solved, fewer tourists will go to the city and go to neighboring towns instead. The famous Taal Lake can also be viewed from neighboring towns.

Tagaytay City depends on tourism as its main source of income.

* * *

But not all of Tagaytay's elite residents are against the project. For example, former Sen. Nikki Coseteng donated part of her property, about 400 meters, to give way to the flyover.

"We hope Mrs. Ramos will realize that the true beneficiaries of the project are the city's poor who depend on tourism for their livelihood," said a city resident.

The contractor of the project, according to the resident who asked not to be named, has already collected 15 percent of the project cost from the government.

Will the government put the project away just to please a former first lady?

* * *

Since former national police chief Roberto Lastimoso is already in place at the land Transportation Office, he should look at existing contracts the agency has with the private sector.

For instance, he should take a second look at the contract between the LTO and the Amalgamated Motors Philippines Inc. signed on July 4, 1984. The contract would have expired in 1988 but it was extended several times.

The contract provides for the manufacture of driver's license and ID photo for a period of four years. The building housing the machines was built by Amalgamated. It would have been turned over to the LTO after the contract's expiration on a build-operate-transfer basis.

* * *

Some LTO oldtimers say Amalgamated has not been up- to-date settling its obligation to the agency.

However, the deficiencies are being overlooked by the government because Amalgamated is reportedly owned by a prominent official of an influential religious sect.

Let's see if the newly installed LTO chief will be intimidated by the influential sect.

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Students' P68-M suit vs FEU 'ill advised,' says school official

By Jerome Aning

STUDENTS of the Far Eastern University were 'ill advised' when they lodged a P68-million damage suit against the school, according to a university official.

FEU vice president of academic affairs Lydia Palaypay on Thursday also said that Judge Rodolfo Ponferrada of Manila Regional Trial Court Branch 17 practically upheld "academic freedom" when he refused to grant a temporary restraining order to 233 FEU accounting students who are questioning the school's extension of their curriculum.

The students argued that FEU did not have the authority to extend their four-year curriculum by one year, so their three-day comprehensive examinations, set to start last Tuesday, should be scrapped.

The students said they ought to have graduated last year, taken the board, and should have been earning income by now.

But Judge Ponferrada denied the students petition for the TRO on the same day the students walked out on their examinations. He said the students would not suffer any material damage and irreparable injury if they take the exams.

Palaypay said FEU's official records reveal that the comprehensive exams given by the university is an integral part of the five-year BS Accountancy curriculum, which has been recognized by the Commission on Higher Education.

"Without the examination, there would be no basis for the grading and graduation of the students," the FEU official said. "The university cannot compromise its standards, which are supported by CHEd policies and regulations."

Palaypay said the FEU achieved its Level II accreditation in 1994. Under the CHEd rules, she said, the school can revise the curriculum without the CHEd's approval, as long as it complies with the minimum requirements prescribed by CHED and the Professional Regulation Commission.

She added the comprehensive examinations would push through as scheduled and, as a "gesture of good faith," the school will schedule a special examination for those who missed the exams.

The students' lawyer JV Bautista advised the students that if they take the exams, which are a prerequisite for graduation, they will be recognizing the legitimacy of the school's position on the controversy and will damage their lawsuit.

NBI snares con pair

By Jerome Aning

NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation agents last week arrested two suspected members of a swindling ring for falsifying documents to dupe Makati firms.

NBI Special Action Unit chief Vicente de Guzman III said Felicitas San Agustin, 48, of Bustos Street, R. Papa, Caloocan City, and Beverly Cruz, 20, of Hermosa Street, Tondo, Manila, were charged with estafa through falsification of commercial documents.

The Makati prosecutors office is seeking bail of P40,000 for each suspect.

De Guzman said the NBI are now looking for five more suspects. He identified three of them as Joey Aquino, Theresa Tan and Benjamin Yap.

Investigation showed that on March 1, Aquino called up Judith Garcia, general manager of Karplus Marketing in Makati City, and ordered 12 Pioneer car stereo sets worth P105,000.

He faxed a purchase order to Garcia's firm. But Garcia got suspicious when she conducted a background check and found out that Aquino's firm, Center for International Investments Inc. (CII), supposedly based in Pasay City, does not exist.

Garcia said she later learned that the telephone numbers Aquino used belonged to a fax-rental establishment in Sta. Cruz, Manila.

The next day, Garcia contacted SAU agents, who followed Cruz after she picked up the car stereos and gave Garcia an Equitable-PCI Bank check for P105,600.

The check was later found to be a forgery, the NBI said.

Cruz loaded the stereo units on a taxi and picked up San Agustin on Gil Puyat Avenue. It was then the NBI agents intercepted them for questioning.

Further investigation revealed that on Feb. 15, the suspects also ordered a set of microlab photometers worth P400,000 from another Makati firm, and used a falsified Equitable-PCI Bank check to pay for the equipment.

Hitman slain in shootout

SUSPECTED hitman Christopher Aguilar was killed in a shootout with policemen Wednesday, following a two-hour car chase on the North Luzon Expressway near the San Simon, Pampanga exit.

Pampanga police chief Senior Supt. Ismael Rafanan said Aguilar of L&S subdivision, Angeles City, was driving what turned out to be a stolen Toyota Corolla when he hit a still unidentified commuter in San Fernando.

Policemen were alerted to the hit-and-run incident and began chasing Aguilar about 10 a.m., Rafanan said.

Pursuing Angeles City lawmen called on the San Fernando police to intercept Aguilar when he managed to get out of Angeles City, Rafanan said.

The traffic police of the Philippine National Construction Corp. spotted the suspect's car near the San Simon exit and alerted the San Fernando police.

Cornered, Aguilar rammed his car on a patrol vehicle. When his car turned turtle and hit a fence, Aguilar took the Honda Civic of a motorist at gunpoint.

Police caught up with the suspect in Sta. Rita town, Bulacan. The police fired warning shots at Aguilar. But the suspect fired back, prompting the lawmen to shoot and kill the suspect, Rafanan said. ***Tonette Orejas,*** *PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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10	GOT 2 BELIEVE
11	ESKANDALOSA
12	GOT 2 BELIEVE

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1	SHALLOW HAL
2	13 GHOSTS
3	ESKANDALOSA
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
7	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8	WE WERE SOLDIERS
9	CLOSED
10	CLOSED
11	CLOSED
12	CLOSED

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5	13 GHOSTS
6	SHALLOW HAL
7	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
8	WE WERE SOLDIERS
9	GOT 2 BELIEVE
10	ESKANDALOSA

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1	ALI
2	MARSHALL DICK
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1	SHALLOW HAL
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4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5	HINOG SA PILIT
6	GOT 2 BELIEVE

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2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
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4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

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3	GOT 2 BELIEVE

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2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	ESKANDALOSA

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3	ESKANDALOSA
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6	13 GHOSTS
7	RESERVE
8	RESERVE

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A	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

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3	ESKANDALOSA
4	

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2	
3	
4	ESKANDALOSA
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6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
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8	13 GHOSTS
9	ALI

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8	13 GHOSTS

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3	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4	GOT 2 BELIEVE
5	ESKANDALOSA

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3	RESERVE
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1	GOT 2 BELIVE
2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND

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1	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
2 (DTS)	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DOLBY)	BEAUTIFUL MIND
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

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2 (DOLBY)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 (DTS)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

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2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
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4 (DTS)	COLLATERAL DAMAGE

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3	ESKANDALOSA
4 (DTS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS

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2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
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5	MOTHMAN PROPHECIES

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2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
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3	

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1	

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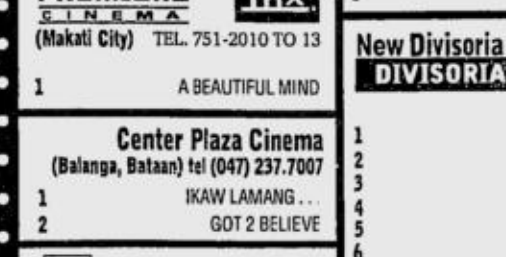

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6	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
7	SHALLOW HAL
8	GOT 2 BELIEVE
9	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10	ALI

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1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4	13 GHOSTS
5	BEAUTIFUL MIND
6	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
7	WE WERE SOLDIERS

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1	ALI
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	BEAUTIFUL MIND
4	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
5	13 GHOSTS
6	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
7	GOT 2 BELIEVE
8	ESKANDALOSA

Novaliches
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1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	WE WERE SOLDIERS
3	GOT 2 BELIEVE
4	13 GHOSTS
5	BEAUTIFUL MIND
6	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
7	ESKANDALOSA
8	ALI

Imus
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1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
2	GOT 2 BELIEVE
3	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4	BEAUTIFUL MIND
5	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6	ESKANDALOSA

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3	THE OTHERS
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6	IKAW LAMANG . . .

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5	GOT 2 BELIEVE
6	RAT RACE

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6	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

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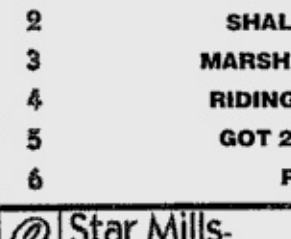

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The taste of Pinoy burgers

By Jose Javier Reyes
Contributor

IF the American were one of those who believed that being in any place where the blonde and blue-eyed outnumber the black-haired and pug-nosed meant being in another planet, it would have been easier to understand his argument.

Call it political incorrectness, bigotry or downright arrogance: White folk belittling their little brown brothers sans rhyme or reason deserve to get their face bashed in, most especially when they flaunt their assumed superiority right in our national territory.

After so many years of independence and two (or three, depending on which side of the political fence you are) exercises in People Power, we should have outgrown the Hey-Joe-wanna-buy-watch sort of mindset. Most especially now, when fashionable rhetoric seems to point to endless references to moral recovery, nation-building or, uh, "this nation can be great again," our tolerance for the mockery of our beloved brown race should be set as a measure of our attempts to be truly *makabayan*.

But then, this American is neither ugly nor bigoted. In fact, he loves the Philippines. He loves it enough to come back here every so often, enthralled by the charm, intelligence and warmth of the people. Although he has no ties that bind him to the archipelago, he seizes every opportunity to cross the Pacific and immerse himself in what he calls the lyrical quality of the Filipino personality.

This is probably why it hurt to hear him out — and he never had to use the socio-economic, political or military power of his homeland to downgrade our republic. Instead, with much sadness and frustration, he spoke of his observations, careful and hesitant, knowing how we tend to take criticism so personally and not assess the constructive worth of what sounds like derogatory statements. Remember Claire Danes? Well, yes, she pushed the button a bit too far. She made it sound like we made pets out of cockroaches. But she was here for a grand total of how many months?

Experience

In this case, the *Americano* was speaking out of experience, not from a fleeting tourist moment but through years of constant contact and even assimilation of our idiosyncratic ways. He has learned to accept that, yes, we do have exotic *esteros* that breed mutant micro-organisms and with water so polluted that it will not come as a surprise if the Loch Ness monster says "hello" to us one of these days.

He did not make a big deal out of the *bangaw* and the roaches that fly in the air with impressive confidence. He has even learned to appreciate *bagoong* and mastered the art of eating *balut*.

And yet he is so sad about what he sees. The *Americano* was quick to point out what we all know, but refuse to acknowledge. He lamented that what he calls "a beautiful country with such beautiful people" seems to be torn apart by the very fact that there is no sense of nationhood whatsoever.

The Blonde Guy cannot understand why, despite all attempts at reform, the same maladies of governance and society consistently emerge. We were quick in defending the tedious recurrence of graft, corruption, political grandstanding, etcetera, etcetera, by saying that ours is a damaged history.

As much as he understands our people, he may not be completely aware of the unique yet tragic circumstances that mangled our values, castrated the breeding of true leadership, and even warped our sense of being one nation.

He said he knows that much, but he still cannot figure out why we cannot get our act together. The whole idea of a "national vision" seems to be absent, I said. The GI Joe shook his head and sighed.

Sensitive nerve

"Is that why, at a moment of great crisis, you guys don't rally to try to beat the odds and instead choose to run to the nearest embassy, acquire a visa and get out?"

Yes, I said.

"Then you don't think your country is worth the fight?"

I looked at the others at the table, hoping that somebody would come up with a piece worthy of elocution contests. Instead, everyone chose to be silent, hoping the topic would shift to something more comfortable.

A sensitive nerve was touched. We all know it, but we simply do not speak about it, especially in front of a foreigner. We can always rationalize the divisiveness of our people because, yes, we belong to more than 7,000 islands, and yes, we speak more than 70 languages, and yes, even before we developed a culture we were conquered, colonized and culturally confused.

But just how long can we make references to the disparities in our historical development to justify why we have remained this way after all these years? As individuals, as private citizens, we never gave much of a hoot to these very issues that define and describe the fibers of our existence. And as long as we do not address the true crux of the problem, how can we ever achieve a solution?

Certainly not through the promises of politicians running for office, because we have heard far too many of those recipes for panaceas. And most certainly, the options are not guaranteed by grandiloquent statements in support of institutions that will always function to preserve their power within the parameters of the status quo.

It has something to do not only with the air we breathe but also with the pair of lungs we use to inhale a polluted atmosphere. We have seemingly grown numb and fatalistic, with only one option to better our private days: that is, to get out of here fast.

Besides, our *delicadeza* tell us that it is dangerous and even offensive to be confrontational about our problems. We can only throw hints, skirt issues and imply what should really be brandished right in our faces. Or we simply bow our heads and pray and hope that the problems will go away.

Imagination

Then the *Americano* started talking about his trips to Vietnam and Thailand. Oh, yes, a number of us have frequented the bargain haven of Bangkok to know what Thailand is all about nowadays. Here we were not only talking about the tourists (the ultimate gauge of the attraction of any country is the number of free-spending tourists on the streets) but also about the creative climate that exists there.

We ended up talking about the ingenuity of design, in jewelry, furniture and native crafts. In this area, the Filipino can never be a poor second.

Yet what the *Americano* observed was the width of imagination, the extent of innovation of the Thais in molding the traditional into a sense of the modern. He cited the ingenious ways the Thais used accessible native resources and transformed them into designs that were globally impressive and therefore competitive.

Others were quick in saying that we do have Filipinos who make it big abroad, but then he clarified that there should really be so much more considering how brilliant we are as an artistic people.

There is truth in that. For how can we explain why even in the field of jewelry making we have allowed our most precious folk arts to die a natural death? Although the resources in that field are far more abundant in Thailand, once upon a time we too boasted of the best artisans and craftsmen in this part of the world. Whatever happened to them?

Well, in Thailand, vocational training in jewelry making is given in high school, and the government encourages the hard work invested in this craft.

Our legislators have far more gargantuan problems than to worry about the death of *tamburin*-making in our country. They prefer to investigate each other, or discuss the coco levy rigmarole.

Hang-ups

"Maybe it's all the hang-ups," the *Americano* thought aloud. "You guys have a lot of hang-ups. You like clear-cut definitions of what is right and what is wrong, like black and white, while entertaining so many shades of gray."

Is that bad, I asked? "No, it's not bad. But there is the preoccupation with guilt. It's almost Orwellian. You know, like you are kids monitored by Big Brother and the solution to every problem is to be consistently told what is right from wrong."

Someone commented that because of other pressing factors, the maturity of the Filipinos in handling independence is still in the developing stage. The American did not quite understand this. "For how long?" he asked. "And why this extended developing stage? What seems to hold you back?"

Inspiration? Role models? Could it be that this demand for the uplifting, the positive imaging, the inspiring is to fill the gap left by an entire generation devoid of political idealism and selflessness because of amoral lessons learned from the recent past?

As much as there is a need to stress the importance of goodness, of bright and sunny days with beautiful soap-opera happy endings, there should also be a truthful acknowledgment of what our real problems are, so that we may find the practical and effective path to change.

"That's why we are insisting on moral recovery," another contributed. I begged to be excused from the conversation because this was a touchy subject for me personally.

Sex

But the talk led to an even more interesting dissection of what is indeed moral recovery. And another one in the party barked, "Sex!"

THE TASTE/ A27

'Women, Security, Peace'

CHIEF presidential legal counsel Avelino J. Cruz Jr. will be the main speaker in the symposium on "Women, Security Issues and Peace Initiatives" today at the Jade Vine Executive Inn in Ermita, Manila. He will speak before women leaders on "Anti-Terrorism and Peace."

Invited to speak on "Women and Conflict Zones" are peace advocates Rezza Hontiveros and Karen Tañada of the Coalition for Peace.

The symposium is organized jointly by the Manila Woman's Club (MWC), the Philippine Woman's Christian Temperance Union Inc. (PWCTUI), the Women's Rights Movement of the Philippines (WRMP), and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) of the Philippines Inc. Lourdes Casas Quezon heads the MWC; Villa Granada de Guia, both WRMP and PWCTUI; and Vilma D. Umengan, YWCA.

Steering committee members are Dr. Carmencita T. Aguilar, Nelia Sancho, and Ma. Virginia L. Sadorra and Neriza B. Llena of YWCA.

Registration fee is P100.

Ceramic collecting

CYNTHIA Ongpin Valdes, a cultural researcher specializing in trade ceramics found in the Philippines, will speak on "The History of Ceramic Collecting in the Philippines" today at 10 a.m. at the Museum of the Filipino People in Agrifina Circle, Rizal Park.

Ms Valdes, former president of the Oriental Ceramic Society of the Philippines, will trace the early history of ceramic specimen collecting from the ethnographical mission of Antoine Alfred Marche in 1879-1885 to the present.

Reunion

IT WILL be a happy and nostalgic day for the 1953 of Malinta Elementary School, formerly a part of Polo, Bulucan and now part of Valenzuela City. The graduates will hold their reunion tomorrow, 1 p.m., at the Karuhatan Barangay Hall.

Batch '53 members may get in touch with their classmates Remedios de la Cruz, 292-38-16; Aurea de Jesus, 294-59-39; Arcadia de Castro, 444-13-33; Dr. Ruben G. Salvador, 294-23-02; and Eusebio S. San Diego, 932-08-85.

How to properly dispose of disposable diapers

By Ana Ver-Papa and Joey C. Papa
Contributors

YESTERDAY was Women's Day, and the whole month of March, in fact, is dedicated to all women of the world. It should also be dedicated to Mother Nature from whom all women, and men, too, derive their nurturing ways.

In the Catholic community, March 25 is the feast of the Annunciation, when an angel told the Virgin Mary that she would be the mother of the son of God. It is also the birthday of a cousin, Mary Ann or Maria Anunciacion. Which brings us to the topic of this article.

About 28 years ago, Mary Ann gave birth to her first-born son. We remember in particular how clean and fragrant were Michael's cloth diapers. A few years later, we also had our own son and we used the same kind of diapers even if disposable diapers were already starting to become popular. We tried to keep the cloth diapers as clean and fragrant as Michael's, although we could not quite make them look exactly as clean and as nice-smelling as Mary Ann's.

We also kept a pack of disposable diapers from which we would pull out one or two when we brought our son Emman out on special occasions. But for going to the mall or playing in the park, and for everyday, we made him use his cloth diapers. Paolo followed, and later Amihan, and both of them also used cloth diapers most of the time.

Only lately did these baby items disappeared from their cabinets, and only because the cloth diapers were already too worn out after the growing children continued to use them for wiping off sweat.

Disposable diapers, however, have completely taken over the wardrobe of so many babies, rich and poor alike. We would often feel uneasy at the sight of young parents pushing a grocery cart full of disposable diapers, for we wondered how big a slice of these items would cut from the family budget.

Worse is the sight of used disposable diapers strewn on the streets in the early morning, after the neighborhood pets and stray animals have feasted on garbage bags carelessly left outside gates.

It was said that the Payatas disaster was due to a large extent to all those disposable diapers (as well as sanitary napkins), deposited in that Quezon City dump.

It's about time cloth diapers made a comeback.

And there are good signs that they are indeed slowly regaining their former place, at least for the babies of Karina Galang-Fernandez and her friends.

Karina is a young mother and a teacher of psychology at the Ateneo de Manila University. She has a one-and-a-half-year-old daughter who's "very cute," according to the grandmother, Dr. Angelina Galang, head of the Environmental Studies Institute of Miriam College.

Composting napkins

We support the use of reusable diapers, as well as the composting of feminine napkins. And a return to the *pasador*, what our grandmothers used for sanitary napkins? That would be revolutionary.

This proposition to dispose used feminine napkins by composting has been favorably received by women, and men too, who have been educated in ecological solid waste management.

To the squeamish and the new initiates in ecological waste management, the easier way to deal with used feminine napkins is to leave them flat, not balled up, and wrapped in used paper with the ends left unsealed to better let in moisture to hasten composting in the compost pile, pit, sack or tire.

The napkin's plastic cover is quite thin. When the waste in the container has been composted, the tiny bits of plastic can be easily separated with a screen.

It is much better, of course, to separate the cotton from the plastic. This entails (a) two waste bins in the bathroom, which are what all bathrooms should have, one for plastics and the other for the biodegradable waste such as tissue paper, cotton, etc.; and (b) a wash basin with water. It is easy to tear open one side of the napkin to remove the cotton pad that should go straight into the biodegradable waste bin and does not need to be wrapped in paper.

The plastic cover goes first into the wash basin for cleaning and removing the remaining bits of cotton. Wash the plastic, pour out the water slowly and collect the wet bits of cotton, which should go into the bio bin. The clean plastic goes into the non-bio bin.

What you can do

With a more organized community system in place (a materials recovery facility or ecological center), that plastic could find its way to the recycling plant. The cotton, which carries very good compost material, will go back to the earth.

Mothers and fathers who cannot as yet avoid using disposable diapers for their babies can follow the same steps for composting feminine napkins. As if taking care of babies and feeling lousy on certain days were not enough, especially for women!

Women, as well as some men, might protest: Why should we burden ourselves with composting? This also happens to be the attitude of people who think that it is the duty of the government to handle public waste.

The late US President John F. Kennedy said: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." The statement can also be appropriately applied to the matter of practising proper waste management, including composting, at home, which can contribute much to the public good.

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LRT extension waiting for Alvarez, says Cavite governor

By Norman Bordadora

CAVITE Gov. Ayong Maliksi yesterday asked the Commission on Appointments to finally confirm Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez and help Cavite residents who are working in Metro Manila.

In a statement, Maliksi said the continued delay in the confirmation of the transportation and communications chief also results in the delay of the construction of the Light Rail Transit extension into the province.

"The proposed LRT extension to Bacoor could not get underway so long as Secretary Alvarez continues to be grilled by the Commission on Appointments," Maliksi said. "We need the project very badly."

He said that aside from making life easy for Cavite residents who are working in the metropolis, extending the LRT to Cavite would also jumpstart renewed business activity in the province.

"For one thing, Metro Manila's overflow population would soon relocate in Cavite because the LRT would make travel faster and easier," the governor said. "In a sense, Southern Tagalog would be made nearer to the business centers in Manila."

Cavite business leaders also said that aside from bringing in fresh investments and new residents to the province, the rail system to and from Manila would also jack up property prices in the region, according to the governor.

"This project is very vital to the development of Cavite and Southern Tagalog," he said. "And we believe Secretary Alvarez has the capability to pursue this project and see this through until it is completed for Caviteños and Metro Manilans."

Maliksi gave Alvarez credit for the improved operations of the Metro Rail Transit along the whole stretch of Edsa and the Light Rail Transit from Monumento in Caloocan to Baclaran in Parañaque.

"Imagine having that kind of service going all the way to Cavite," he said. "It would be a great ride for the people of Cavite as well as for the business climate in the province."

Aside from the proposed Cavite extension of the LRT, another stretch in northern Metro Manila is being planned, from Quezon Boulevard to Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City.

ACQUITTED FRAT MAN COMES HOME

'Time to rebuild our family'

By Estanislao Caldez
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

TUGUEGARAO CITY—"Thanks to Mama Mary of Piat, our ordeal is over. It's time for us to rebuild our family."

Thus said a grateful Wilhelmina Narag, referring to the acquittal of her son Reymond of murder charges in connection with the 1994 killing of Dennis Venturina, a graduating public administration student of the University of the Philippines and a member of the school's Sigma Rho fraternity.

Narag, a teacher at the Atulayan Elementary School, and her husband Robert, principal of the Linao Elementary School, on Wednesday brought home Reymond, who had been detained at the Quezon City jail since 1995 for the killing of Venturina.

Five of young Narag's Scintilla Juris fraternity brothers were sentenced to life imprisonment for the Venturina murder in a decision handed down by Judge Jose Mendoza of the Quezon City regional trial court.

One of them was Warren Zingapan, 29, who is also from Cagayan and who topped the board exams for civil engineers with a grade of 95.1 in 1996.

While Reymond was in jail, his family was "dislocated and lacked direction," said his mother.

"All our plans and projects had to be abandoned," she said. "My husband, who was in a hurry to complete his doctoral studies, completed only his academic requirements because he had to frequently visit Reymond in jail and to console him."

The Narags said that during their son's detention, only prayers helped them survive their ordeal.

Reymond, 26, who finished cum laude in public administration in UP, is their only son.

They have three daughters who have all finished their studies in Manila.

Wilhelmina said Reymond was overjoyed about his acquittal. "But he kept on telling us that his joy would have been greater if his fraternity brothers had also been acquitted, especially his cellmate, Danilo Feliciano Jr., and Zingapan," said Mrs. Narag.

Zingapan graduated at the top of his class at the Tuguegarao East Central School here.

"*Kenga si* Warren (What a loss for Warren)" was the common expression of those who learned of Zingapan's conviction.

Zingapan's aunt was the education regional director here. Four of his uncles are lawyers and two are doctors. His parents are engaged in business.

A witness during the trial identified Narag and Feliciano as the ones who hit Venturina. Other witnesses upheld the testimony against Feliciano but no witness said that Narag had indeed attacked Venturina.

"Even now, we firmly believe Mama Mary answered our prayers," said Mrs. Narag, who hails from Piat town, site of the basilica minore of the Miraculous Virgin Mary.

The ...

From page A26

Everybody laughed, especially the American. "Oh, yes, that is another one of your obvious preoccupations. Your population is booming like crazy."

At this point, the friendly foreigner became ironically serious. "No, it goes much deeper than that. And it is really sad. It's got everything to do with what people think you are more than who you really are. And that's got something to do with what you think about sex and power."

We all understood what he said without any further discussion.

So I asked him, "If you think we have hit rock bottom and we are all squirming to get out, why do you keep coming back?"

He looked at me with even more sadness. "You ask me that? You're from here, you should be the first to know."

I said I didn't, not from his perspective anyway. He said, "It's the taste of Filipino hamburgers. You guys have come up with such a delicious recipe for hamburgers that I don't get in the States."

I did not give his reply much thought, until much later. And it saddened me even more. Maybe it was the Pinoy hamburgers, but what did this foreigner see in my country that I failed to grasp, or appreciate?

Is it the tsunami of ironies that constitute Philippine life that has drowned me in a pool of utmost frustration and, worse, resignation? Or is it because there is such pain that I have stuck it out here and watched some of my most precious friends evacuate these islands?

How sad, I thought. How definitely sad.

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Kidnapped, raped, robbed

MANDALUYONG City policemen have filed abduction, rape and robbery charges against Rodennis Garcia for allegedly abducting, robbing and sexually molesting a 9-year-old elementary student early this month.

Garcia, 32, of Lianzares Street, Legarda, Sampaloc, Manila, was charged before the Mandaluyong City Prosecutors Office.

Policemen arrested him in Manila, in connection with another rape case. He was turned over to the Mandaluyong police yesterday.

Garcia is wanted for a number of rape cases involving minors in Mandaluyong, the most recent of which was committed against a resident of Barangay Poblacion, Mandaluyong, police said.

Garcia allegedly robbed his victim of her earnings and ring worth P2,300 on Aglipay Street, police said.

The suspect then forcibly took the victim to an abandoned guardhouse at the corner of Guanzon and Mendiola Streets in Pandacan, Manila, and allegedly raped her.

After the sexual assault, Garcia let the girl go, police said.

An elderly woman found the victim crying along Gen. Kalentong Street. The woman turned her over to local barangay officials, police said.

Mandaluyong policemen sought to take the suspect in custody when they learned that Manila lawmen have captured Garcia. At the Mandaluyong police station, the victim pointed to Garcia as the man who kidnapped, robbed and raped her.

The suspect is now detained at the Mandaluyong City Jail.

Nelson Flores

Woman kills self in Manila mall

By Jerome Aning

MARIBETH Mapilisan killed herself in a parking lot of a mall in Malate, Manila, after she had an argument with her boyfriend.

SPO1 Danilo Vidad said Mapilisan, 24, a store employee and a resident of Zaragosa Street, Tondo, was already dead when her body was taken to the Philippine General Hospital on Wednesday.

Initial investigation showed that Mapilisan went to the mall on Pedro Gil Street in Ermita, Manila, and had an argument with her boyfriend, Brian Placido. At 5:30 p.m., she borrowed the key to Placido's Suzuki Vitara (UFV-652).

She then proceeded to the parking lot on the fourth floor, locked herself inside the vehicle and used her cell phone to call a friend, Ritchie Garcia of Tondo.

She then told Garcia that she wanted to kill herself. Garcia tried to talk her out of it, police said.

That evening, Garcia informed Placido of Mapilisan's plan. At 8:40 p.m., the two arrived at the mall's parking lot and found Mapilisan slumped in the front passenger seat with a bullet wound in the head.

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	ALI
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	13 GHOSTS
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	ESKANDALOSA
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ODEON-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ROBEN	ESKANDALOSA
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE / AMERICAN PIE 2

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
B	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
C	ISKANDALOSA

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	535-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-2	EIGA SAI FILM FESTIVAL

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(581-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
CINEMA-2	ESKANDALOSA
CINEMA-3	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	ALI
CINEMA-6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-7	HINOG SA PILIT
CINEMA-8	SHALLOW HAL
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
CINEMA-12	13 GHOSTS
CINEMA-14	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-15	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

LORES

CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED

POWER PLANT CINEMA

CINEMA-1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-2	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-4	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
CINEMA-5	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-6	A BEAUTIFUL MIND

UNIWIDE METROMALL

(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARAÑAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

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GOT 2 BELIEVE - GP 10:40, 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45	A BEAUTIFUL MIND - P13 1:05, 3:50, 6:45, 9:35	WE WERE SOLDIERS - P 13 11:00, 1:40, 4:25, 7:10, 10:00
NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE - R 18 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	WE WERE SOLDIERS - P 13 12:40, 3:25, 6:10, 9:00	A BEAUTIFUL MIND - P13 11:00, 1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:20

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1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN	1 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE	4 SALSA	1 AMORES PERROS (Exclusive Screening)
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS	2 ALI	5 SHALLOW HAL	2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 A BEAUTIFUL MIND	3 A BEAUTIFUL MIND GUARANTEED SEATS	6 WE WERE SOLDIERS	3 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE		7 13 GHOSTS	4 ILLUSIONE MARCH 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16
			1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
			2 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
			3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
			4 GOT 2 BELIEVE
			5 WE WERE SOLDIERS

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March 8 - 5:30pm, 6:30pm, & 7:30pm
March 9 - 3:30pm, 5:30pm, & 6:30pm
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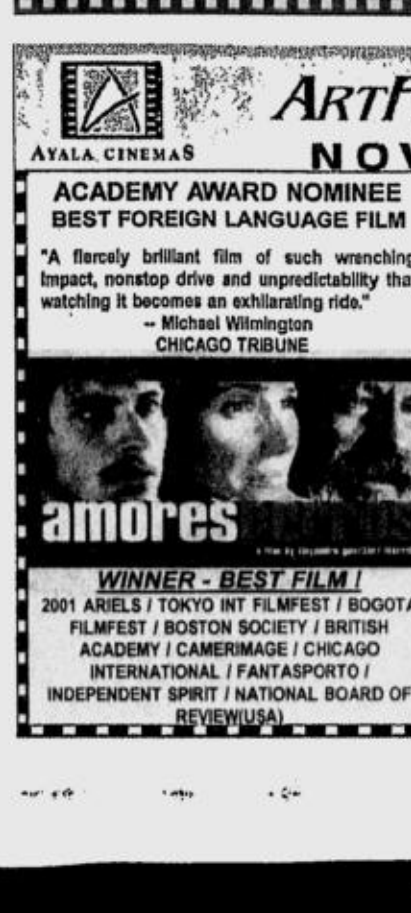

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Firing guns, dodging bullets while riding a motorcycle

By TJ Burgonio

SHE LOOKS innocent, but PO1 Melanie Ortiguesa claims she can engage a group of suspected kidnappers in a running gun battle and emerge unscathed, even if she's only riding a motorcycle.

Ortiguesa, 28, is not boasting. She just went through a rigorous, eight-week course in riding a motorcycle, that included tailing and pursuing kidnap suspects, firing guns and dodging bullets, and crashing properly.

"Someday we'll join the operations. If there's no rider available, we'll be willing to take his place," she said.

The rookie policewoman graduated from the course on March 6 along with another policewoman, PO1 Rosalyn Eve Bonifacio, and 26 other agents of the National Anti-Crime Commission Anti-KFR Task Force (Naktaf).

Even if they're only fresh graduates, the agents are ready to take on kidnappers and other criminals, said training director, Supt. Luis Saligumba, Naktaf's chief information and education officer.

"Even before they graduated, they were already being used in surveillance operations. Now that they have graduated, I can guarantee that they're ready to be deployed for surveillance, hot pursuit operations, everything," he said.

So far, a total of 49 Naktaf agents have completed the course, with the first batch finishing it on Jan. 11. The agency hopes to train all its agents, but it lacks the P300,000 budget needed for training another batch.

Saligumba said that the training was rigorous that three in the first batch and two in the second batch did not finish course after suffering injuries from a bad fall.

"There's not a class (all of whose members) came graduated without injuries," he said.

The critical stages of the course were the motorcycle crash at high speed; beach crossing; rolling logs crossing and jumping at a height higher than an average person's, Saligumba said.

The training was mostly conducted at the parade grounds of the police headquarters in Camp Crame, Quezon City and Central Police District headquarters in Camp Karingal, also in Quezon City.

But there was a part in the where the trainees took a long ride to Mabitac, Laguna, known for its zigzag roads and sharp curbs.

Naktaf launched the motorcycle-riding training in January, hoping that this would help anti-kidnap agents deal with fleeing kidnappers especially during heavy traffic in Metro Manila and the other urban cities in the country.

"Traffic is often heavy in Metro Manila; it's very hard to run after vehicles of suspected kidnappers if you're using a four-wheel vehicle. But when you use a motorcycle, you won't get stuck in traffic," Saligumba said.

"I've seen the good results."

Naktaf is also aware that most kidnappings happen in the metropolis where most kidnapping syndicates operate.

Four of the 17 reported kidnap incidents from January to March 6 this year happened in Metro Manila. The rest took place in Regions 3, 7 and 11 and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Only seven of these cases have been solved, and P16.26-million ransom money has been paid, according to documents furnished by the directorate for police community relations.

Saligumba said that they were not only after kidnappers.

"If we're doing patrols, and chance upon some suspected car thieves and hold-uppers, we have to engage them too. We can't be choosy."

HEALING HANDS ROGER MARGALLO

A soothing hand massage brings smiles to the faces of these women during a recent health tour at the Quezon City circle.

Cop accused of forcing woman to have sex

By Jerome Aning

AN OFFICIAL of the Western Police District is facing charges of acts of lasciviousness after a woman accused him of forcing her to have oral sex with him in Sta. Cruz, Manila.

Insp. Joselito Binayug, head of the Western Police District Station 3 drug enforcement unit has been ordered temporarily relieved from his post by WPD director Chief Supt. Nicolas Pasinos Jr.

The 39-year-old woman, a bed spacer at an apartment on Sulu Street in Sta. Curz told police Binayug and his men barged into the house at about 9:30 p.m. supposedly to search the place for illegal drugs. She said police did not find drugs in the house, but they still took her and three other tenents into custody.

She said they were brought to Station 3 headquarters at the back of the Quiapo Central Market. While at the station, Binayug allegedly told her it would be a pity if she went to jail for she was very beautiful.

The woman said Binayug then asked her to his jeep and had a conversation. He said he offered to find her a place to stay and pay her rent. She said Binayug got mad when he caught her lying about being divorced and having a family in the United States.

She said they returned to the station and a certain Mark fetched her in a white Tamaraw FX. She said Mark told her to transfer to Binayug's waiting jeep. They then drove to the Vista Hotel and Restaurant on C.M. Recto Avenue where Binayug forced her to have oral sex with him, the woman said.

Binayug could not be located for comment. His colleagues said he has "suddenly gone one leave."

Doctor sues couple for besmirching his reputation

By Christian V. Esguerra

A DOCTOR has sued a couple who allegedly blamed him in news reports for the death of their baby last year in Las Piñas.

"I want to teach these people a lesson," said Dr. Manuel Almelor, board director of the Las Piñas Doctors Hospital. "They could not get away with besmirching my reputation."

In his complaint affidavit, Almelor said that Marlon Baltazar and his wife Barbara made it appear in news reports that he was responsible for the death of their son last August. He asked the Las Piñas Regional Trial Court to order the couple to pay him at least P1,250,000 in damages.

Almelor said he had nothing to do with the baby's death. But he became the subject of heavy criticisms by media when the Baltazars blamed him for the death of their baby, Almelor said. He said the couple even demanded that his license be revoked for supposed negligence.

Sometime in August last year, the couple brought their baby, who had high fever, to his lying-in clinic for treatment, Almelor said.

After two days, the baby was discharged, but he asked the parents to bring the baby back to the clinic two days later for another check-up, Almelor said. The couple did not return for the scheduled check-up , he said.

Almelor said he was about to leave for Europe the following morning when he was told that the baby was rushed to the Las Piñas District Hospital due to breathing problems. He said the baby was later transferred to the Las Piñas Doctors Hospital where he died under the care of another doctor.

"Apparently, the doctor made it appear that the boy died because of me," Almelor said.

He said Baltazars then went public and blamed him for the baby's death.

Cavite schools superintendent faces more charges

A TEACHER has accused Cavite schools superintendent Dr. Leonora Ignacio of harassment, malicious persecution and misconduct, said a statement from the office of Cavite Gov. Ayong Maliksi.

Gloria Jaymalin, a Grade 2 teacher from Salawag Elementary School in Dasmariñas City, said she has spent the last 10 years of her life defending herself from a "litany of trumped-up charges" Ignacio allegedly orchestrated.

The statement said Ignacio is also facing criminal and administrative charges filed against her by the Fact-Finding and Intelligence Bureau (FFIB) of the Ombudsman for alleged "gross dishonesty and conduct unbecoming of a government officials." The Office of the Deputy Ombudsman for Luzon is handling the cases.

Jaymalin said she is appealing to Education Secretary Raul Roco to "dismiss Dr. Ignacio from the service or at least suspend her while the Ombudsman cases are being tried." She said many teachers in Cavite are afraid to talk while Ignacio is still in power.

She said Ignacio had unsuccessfully charged her over the years with malicious mischief, falsification of public documents, dishonesty and immorality either at the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, the Civil Service Commission or at the Ombudsman.

Jaymalin has also filed criminal charges against Edna C. Papa, a former school principal whom Jaymalin claimed had accused her of falsifying her daily time record.

The DECS and the CSC had both cleared Jaymalin of the falsification charge, but Papa elevated the case to the regional court in Imus reportedly at the instigation of Ignacio, Jaymalin said.

She said the Imus court had already set several hearings, which Papa did not attend. She said Papa was now residing in Canada.

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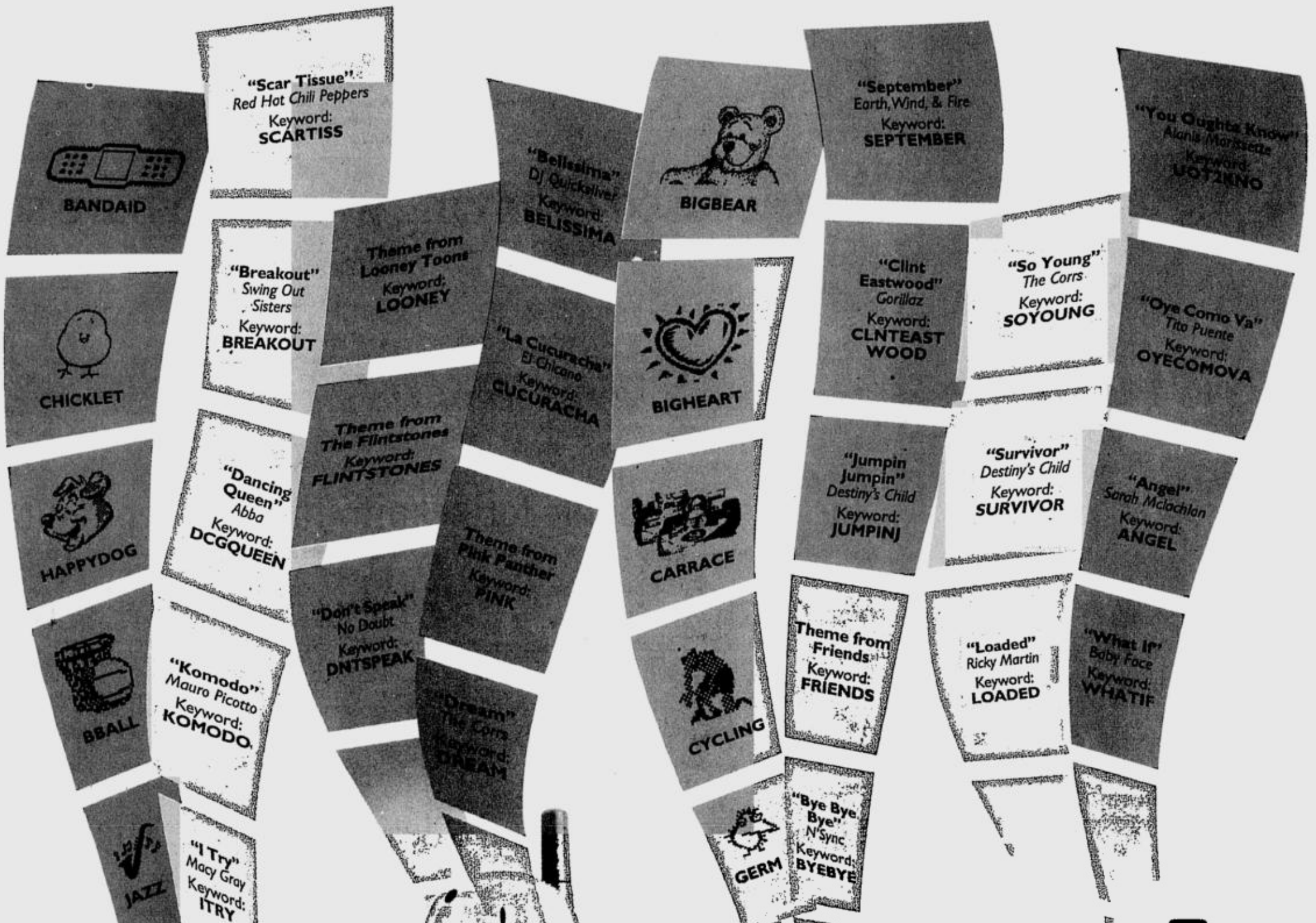

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma

ABN Amro sells RP savings bank unit

By Doris C. Dumlao

EUROPEAN banking giant ABN Amro Holding NV is divesting its consumer banking business in the Philippines through the sale of more than $170 million worth of assets to local thrift banks BPI Family Savings Bank and Robinsons Savings Bank.

In separate disclosures to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Bank of the Philippine Islands and JG Summit Holdings Inc., parent firms of the acquiring thrift banks, said an agreement had been signed to acquire the consumer banking assets of the Dutch bank in the Philippines.

Ayala-owned BPI Savings said it would take over the consumer loan portfolio of ABN Amro Bank Inc., the Philippine branch of ABN Amro, while Gokongwei-owned RSB would buy the branch network and deposit base of ABN Amro Savings Bank.

RSB said it would take over ABN Amro Savings Bank's 20 branches and deposit liabilities in excess of P5 billion, while BPI Family would purchase the auto and mortgage loans.

ABN Amro's disclosure in the Netherlands estimated the worth of assets sold to RSB at more than $100 million (P5.1 billion) while those sold to BPI Savings at $70 million, but did not indicate how much premium the local banks had agreed to pay for these assets.

"The divestment is in line with ABN Amro's strategy of focusing on its core client segments," the Dutch bank said.

On the other hand, JG Summit president and RSB chair Lance Gokongwei said the acquisition of ABN Amro Savings Bank's assets would expand RSB's branch network to 32.

"The acquisition will catapult RSB among the top seven thrift banks in terms of assets," Gokongwei said. "The acquisition will strengthen key markets nationwide, where the JG Summit group already has a presence."

Gokongwei said RSB would absorb ABN Amro Savings Bank's 28,000 customer base as well as its employees.

BPI Family, for its part, said the final sale and closing of the deal with ABN Amro would be subject to approval from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and would likely be completed within the next 90 days.

The Philippine unit of ABN Amro diversified from predominantly wholesale operations into the consumer banking business in September 1999 when it acquired Great Pacific Savings Bank from the Yuchengco group. The purchase expanded its franchise in the Philippines from a mere foreign branch to a full service bank.

With the divestment, ABN Amro would continue to conduct banking operations in the Philippines but reverting to a wholesale/corporate niche.

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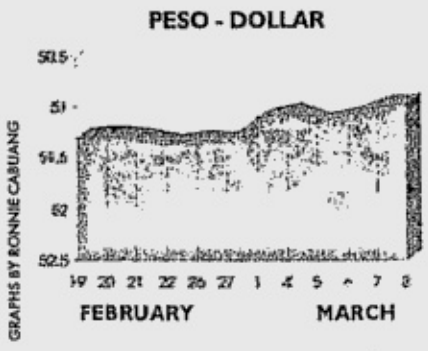
PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY RONNIE CABUANG

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱50.97 = $1

As of 5 p.m., March 8, 2002

¥127.82 = $1

As of 5 p.m., March 8, 2002

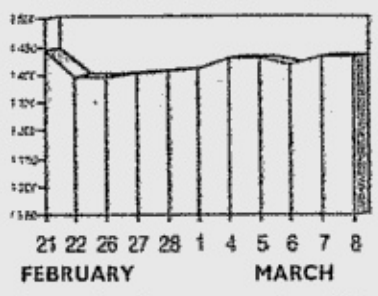
GOLD: $288.10/288.50

per ounce Hong Kong, March 8, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Stocks end flat

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

STOCKS closed flat yesterday despite the firmer peso as most investors chose to wait for more signals from corporate earnings, keeping the market in an extended consolidation.

Traders said they doubted whether the peso would remain strong after the huge inflows from the government's sovereign bond offer and corporate investments start to ebb.

What cushioned the market's decline were the gains in banking heavyweight Metrobank. The bank reduced its par value to P20 per share from P100, thus creating additional liquidity for its stock.

"In general, most investors are just waiting for the release of first quarter earnings. The current level of the market is a little bit expensive, at 18 times price earnings," said Henry Ong, vice president for sales of KGI Securities Inc.

"Corporate earnings should exceed expectations so that the market can be considered cheap again."

The Philippine stock index slid 0.37 point or 0.03 percent at 1,432.19 points. Trades were confined in a narrow seven-point range for the entire session.

Turnover climbed to P632.18 million from P399.4 million on Thursday. Losers outpaced gainers, 36 to 26, while 50 issues were unchanged. *Reuters*

PNB rehab proposal hurdles legal review

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice has approved in principle the final memorandum of agreement drafted by the government and taipan Lucio Tan covering the conversion to equity of the government's P26 billion in advances to Philippine National Bank.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho yesterday said he met with Justice Secretary Hernando Perez who raised three minor points that the government needed to address immediately in the MOA before the final approval could be secured.

"These minor points raised by the DOJ will not affect the substance of the agreement," the finance chief said.

TAN

The DOJ's final approval must first be obtained before Malacañang could give the go-ahead to the government agencies involved, primarily Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp., to sign the deal.

The signing of the MOA was originally scheduled on Jan. 20 but had been postponed indefinitely. The government appears to be delaying the signing while the Senate committee on finance is investigating the debt-to-equity conversion.

But this was denied by Camacho, saying the justice department was carefully scrutinizing the deal to ensure that it would not be disadvantageous to the government.

Under the draft agreement, PDIC would convert P7.8 billion of the government's advances into a form of tier 2 capital so its role as a bank insurer and regulator would not conflict with its ownership in the country's sixth largest bank.

The conversion would increase the government's stake in PNB to 44.98 percent from 18 percent and dilute Lucio Tan's ownership from 67 percent to 44.98 percent.

Under the proposed deal, the government would also offset P10 billion worth of government advances from PNB. Of the P25 billion in emergency assistance the bank sought from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the PDIC, PNB has settled only P1.1 billion.

The BSP, as part of the deal, had transferred the P15 billion in obligations to PDIC, which itself extended P10 billion in loans to PNB.

The remaining P6.1 billion not covered by the conversion program would be restructured by the central bank over a 10-year period as part of the rehabilitation of the bank, which had sustained huge losses in the last three years.

Last year, the bank's losses

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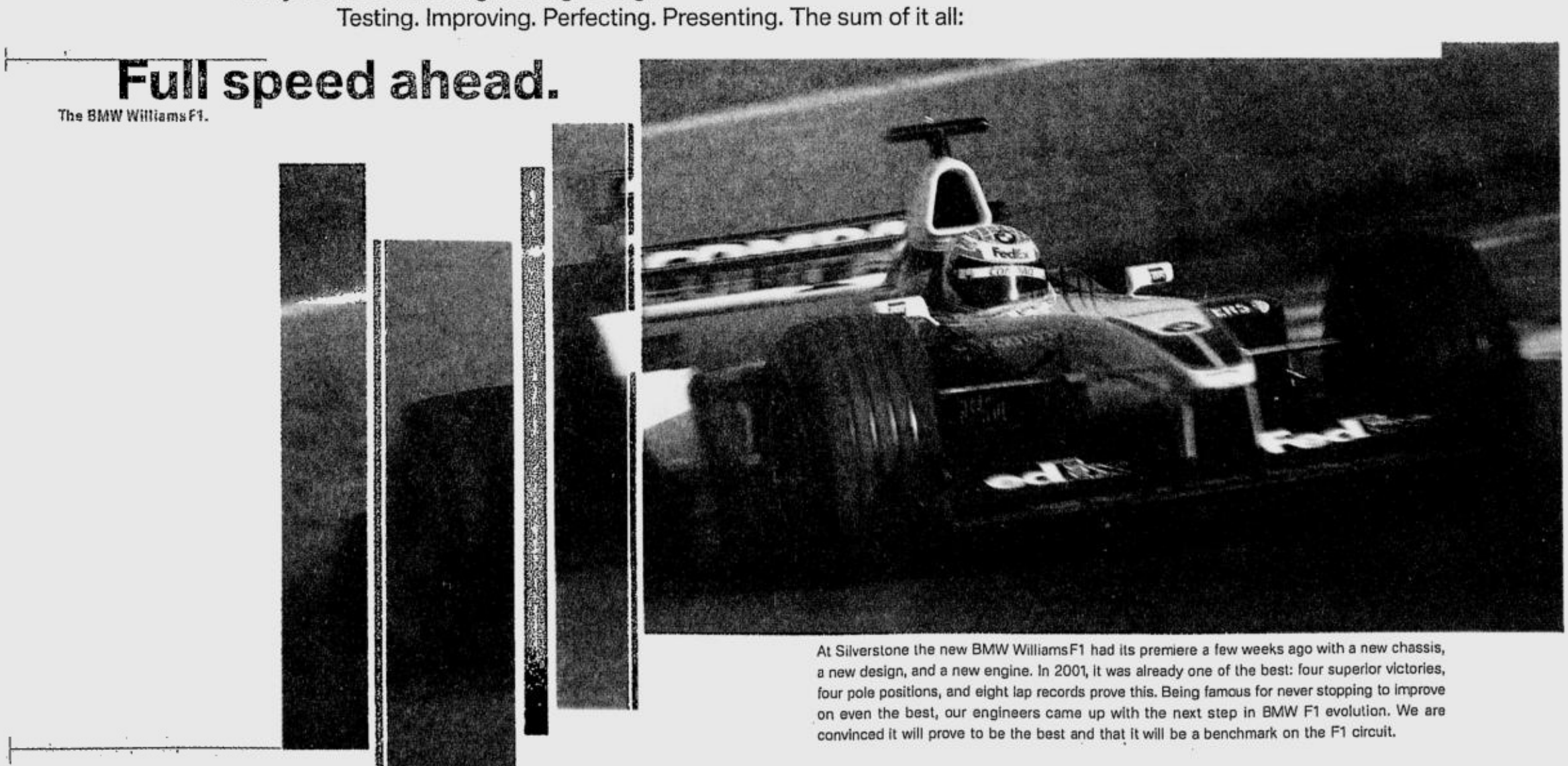

At Silverstone the new BMW WilliamsF1 had its premiere a few weeks ago with a new chassis, a new design, and a new engine. In 2001, it was already one of the best: four superior victories, four pole positions, and eight lap records prove this. Being famous for never stopping to improve on even the best, our engineers came up with the next step in BMW F1 evolution. We are convinced it will prove to be the best and that it will be a benchmark on the F1 circuit.

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Handle with scare

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

NOW I don't want to scare exporters. They are surely having a tough time. Reports say that exports are down a great deal. I just want to tell them to shut up from now on.

For the more they talk, the more they will get it from the Philippine Ports Authority, or the PPA. Somebody in the PPA does not like loudmouthed exporters.

The PPA of course is in charge of all seaports in the country, except the one in Cebu, which is its own separate republic. Well, Cebu has its own national language.

Just for show, anyway, the PPA held mocked public hearings on its plan to increase the cargo handling fees at the ports. The exporters balked at the plan.

"Vehement opposition," in fact, was how Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama described it in a privilege speech in which he exposed anomalies in the PPA.

Despite the, er, vehement opposition, the PPA went ahead with the increase. Let this be a warning to exporters. Just don't open your mouth! Look what happens!

* * *

BY the way, word from the camp of Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez, aka Bebot, is for me not to worry, because Bebot is sure to get from Gloriaetta a BRAND NEW appointment. My only reaction to that is this—why?

Why should I worry, for one, about Bebot, or for that matter, about any member of the Cabinet, when Gloriaetta herself does not bother with them.

Bebot just got another nice treat from the powerful Commission on Appointments. It's what's known in the CA business as a technical by-pass.

No, it has nothing to do with heart surgey. It only means that Bebot must go through a lot of grilling before the CA. His confirmation is still a long way to go.

With the by-pass, although it's only a "technical" one, Gloriaetta will have to give Bebot a new appointment as head of the critical department DOTC. Big deal!

To start with, Gloriaetta does not have her own loyal people. She had to fill up 10,000 positions. She gave them to complete strangers upon the recommendation of yet complete strangers. To such a person, what's another appointment?

* * *

BUT Gloriaetta does not go out of her way to push for Bebot before the CA. She is not doing for Bebot, for example, what she did for Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

For the Whiz, Gloriaetta even expressed her support in public, announcing it to media, since her money man was then being besieged by the Dancing Queen.

At that time, I heard that Gloriaetta even dined CA members. Of course none of them admitted ever talking to Gloriaetta about the case of the Whiz.

So who said Gloriaetta has no charm whatsoever? She exuded charm in talks with the Japanese prime minister and the American president. Believe me, she's not all *taray*.

As trade undersecretary years ago, Gloriaetta used to go out drinking with groups of newsmen. While she never outdrunk any of us, she could really be "one of the boys."

I thought that was charm. She turned it on again with the CA members to help the Whiz get his confirmation. Moreover, she had to "re-appoint" Bebot. Why?

* * *

BACK to the PPA, in a so-called economic summit recently, business and government cracked their brains—if any—for ways to make the Philippine economy competitive.

That's when Gloriaetta herself promised us that this cute administration would lower the cost of moving goods. I suppose it included cargo handling fees at the ports.

Alright, I know it was just a promise, and we all know what promises actually mean when they come from public officials. It's like a kiss. You know—only lip service!

Still, when the promise comes from the boss of all bosses, the very same person who appoints the PPA boss, surely a promise should come close to being THE policy.

But who is Gloriaetta to the PPA? Only last January, as exporters tried to endure hard times, the PPA raised the cargo handling fees by between 10 and 15 percent.

I don't know how, with such an increase, Gloriaetta can keep her promise to lower the cost of moving goods, but if you figure out how, give me a call.

* * *

FOR the past three years, the PPA was busy increasing the cargo handling fees. I'm sure the PPA had good reasons for the increase. It's just that nobody knows what they are.

Congressman Villarama figured that, since mid-1998, or in only three years, the increases already hit 80 percent for foreign cargo and 52 percent for domestic.

A lot of the exporters got hit both ways, coming and going. They paid higher fees for imported raw materials, plus for shipping out their export goods. *Buhay ka pa!*

You see, shipping firms charge them for stevedoring. I have nothing to do with it, okay! My only connection here is, well, my mother says I have the mouth of a stevedore.

Actually, stevedoring is the handling of cargo inside the ship. Cargo is usually the large containers. Don't tell me those containers require a lot of, uh, "handling" aboard!

Villarama even asked why they make more money in cargo handling than in shipping. They really scare me now. What's this—handle with scare?

Bourse elects new board today

By Doris C. Dumlao

STOCKBROKERS will troop to the Philippine Stock Exchange today to hold their first board elections under a demutualized regime.

Today's poll will likely be marked by a showdown between Robert Coyiuto and Vivian Yuchengco, both vying for the PSE chairmanship.

The two veteran brokers lead the list of 10 broker-candidates aspiring for seven of the 15 PSE board seats. The remaining eight slots were already assigned to non-broker representatives chosen earlier by the PSE nomination committee.

The 15 board members will name their new chair to replace Felipe Yap of F. Yap Securities, the bourse's head in the last two years. Yap assumed the PSE chairmanship in 2000 at the height of the BW Resources Corp. price manipulation scandal.

Coyiuto, a former PSE chair, is the nominee of R. Coyiuto Securities Inc., while Yuchengco is the nominee of The First Management Resources and Management Corp.

COYIUTO

YUCHENGCO

Both are members of the outgoing PSE board.

Running as an independent candidate is Senen Matoto of BPI Securities.

Coyiuto has four other candidates in his ticket: Eddie Gobing of Lucky Securities (reelectionist); Federico Lim of Belson Securities; Harry Liu of Summit Securities (reelectionist and former PSE chair), and, Edwin Luy of Triton Securities.

Yuchengco is running with three other broker candidates: Alicia Arroyo of RCBC Securities, Marita Limlingan of Regina Capital and Jojo Madrid of Philippine Equity Partners.

Eight of the 15 slots are excluded from today's balloting since they were already assigned to non-broker members who were named earlier by the PSE nomination committee. This process, however, is being questioned by former PSE president Ramon Garcia (who was disqualified from the elections) and other stockbrokers.

Among those chosen by the committee as non-broker directors for another term were five incumbent directors: PSE president Ernest Leung; economist Cayetano Paderanga; constitutionalist Joaquin Bernas; ABS-CBN chair Eugenio Lopez III and former Meralco president Mario Camacho.

The three other private sector representatives to the board were: banker Peter Favila, former Petron Corp. chair Monico Jacob and former Customs Commissioner Tomas Apacible.

Banks' bad loans up, portfolio down in Jan.

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BAD loans of the country's more than 40 commercial banks went up again to 18.3 percent of total loan portfolio in January.

Soured loans in January rose by P8.1 billion to P290 billion from month ago level while the banks' total loan portfolio shrunk by P40.1 billion to P1.58 trillion in the same month, data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed.

The non-performing loan level in January was almost one percentage point higher than the December NPL ratio of 17.35 percent of total loans.

A year ago, the banks' bad loan burden accounted for only 16 percent of their total loan portfolio. The level increased because of the difficulties encountered by borrowers to settle their obligations with the bank despite the decline in domestic interest rates.

Non-performing loans refer to accounts whose principal or interest remained unpaid for 90 days or more after the due date.

A broader measure of bad loans—that covers current restructured loans, foreclosed assets, and its ratio to total loans—also showed an increase in the NPL in January to 29.7 percent of the total portfolio from the previous month's 28.6 percent and 26 percent a year ago.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the current NPL ratio was unacceptable. "We will have to address this situation because an 18 to 20 percent NPL is not acceptable," he said.

Except for state-owned Land Bank of the Philippines and the Development Bank of the Philippines, the loan portfolios of all commercial banks plunged. The total loans of universal banks went down by P40.3 billion while those of foreign bank branches and regular commercial banks by P10.8 billion and P11.5 billion, respectively.

The BSP noted that 30 banks reported higher NPL ratios and 17 of which exceeded the industry average. Only 10 banks were able to contain their soured credit ratios to single-digit levels.

"This (bad loan level) is the reason why we are taking steps to help banks by pushing for the passage of a law that will provide incentives to special purpose vehicles," said Buenaventura.

The commercial banks' coverage ratio, an indicator that tells whether banks have enough reserves to cover defaults, also went down to 43.7 percent in January from 45.2 percent in December.

SM Prime raising P3B for expansion this year

By Elena R. Torrijos

SM PRIME Holdings, the holding company of retail magnate Henry Sy, is looking for ways to raise P3 billion to fund its expansion after its access to funds from Japan Bank for International Cooperation was cut off last year.

SM Prime has continued negotiations with Banco de Oro, BPI Capital, Citibank/Salomon Smith Barney and ING Barings, which were supposed to provide the P3 billion by tapping the JBIC funds through the wholesale lending window of the Development Bank of the Philippines.

A person familiar with the matter explained that SM Prime was not able to tap the DBP lending window because the thrust of the facility had been changed to exclude mall development.

The facility has been re-configured to provide financial support to small and medium enterprises.

SM Prime has been eyeing a P3-billion loan with a maturity of five years and a one-year grace period.

SM Prime chief financial officer Jose Sio did not return the INQUIRER's call for comment.

A spokesperson for the retail developer on Wednesday contacted another official who declined to comment saying that negotiations with potential lenders were still "in a critical stage."

Reports indicated that the company was expecting its profit to rise by 12 percent this year after making an estimated P3.45 billion last year.

SM Prime is believed to have a cash hoard of P4 billion after settling $100 million worth of Euronotes that matured in February.

Equitable names new CEO

THE BOARD of Equitable PCI Bank, the country's third largest bank, yesterday accepted the resignation of bank president and chief executive Deogracias Vistan.

In a meeting yesterday, the board named Equitable PCI senior executive vice president Rene Buenaventura as the new president-CEO and director. Buenaventura, who has been with the bank for more than 20 years, will take over these posts on March 16, a bank statement said.

Vistan, who became president and chief executive last June, will become a special adviser.

Earlier reports said Vistan had differences with the bank's majority shareholders.

The board members said they accepted with regret Vistan's "wish to step down following the bank's successful confidence recovery program under the joint leadership of chair Antonio Go and himself."

Equitable, the Philippines' 25th largest company, suffered a run on funds in late 2000 during a corruption scandal that embroiled then President Joseph Estrada, who was deposed in a popular revolt in January last year. *AFP*

CURRENCIES

March 8, 2002 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency In US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.133144	1.000000	51.0070
Japan	Yen	0.008910	0.007863	0.4011
United Kingdom	Pound	1.618584	1.428400	72.8584
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145290	0.128218	6.5400
Switzerland	Franc	0.679343	0.599520	30.5797
Canada	Dollar	0.715730	0.631632	32.2177
Singapore	Dollar	0.623703	0.550418	28.0752
Australia	Dollar	0.594826	0.524934	26.7753
Bahrain	Dinar	3.005848	2.652661	135.3043
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.302155	0.266652	13.6011
Brunei	Dollar	0.619882	0.547046	27.9032
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000114	0.000101	0.0052
Thailand	Baht	0.026212	0.023132	1.1799
UAE	Dirham	0.308524	0.272272	13.8878
Korea	Won	0.000869	0.000767	0.0391
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.882500	45.0137
Brazil	Real	0.480146	0.423729	21.6131
Denmark	Kroner	0.134594	0.118779	6.0586
India	Rupee	0.023287	0.020551	1.0482
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.298196	0.263158	13.4229
Mexico	New Peso	0.124871	0.110199	5.6209
New Zealand	Dollar	0.487710	0.430404	21.9536
Norway	Kroner	0.129496	0.11428	5.8291
Pakistan	Rupee	0.108902	0.016681	0.8508
South Africa	Rand	0.097696	0.086217	4.3977
Sweden	Kroner	0.110271	0.097314	4.9637
Syria	Pound	0.022088	0.019493	0.9943
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032478	0.028662	1.4620
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001163	0.001026	0.0523

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, March 8, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	100	100	100	100	300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	70	70	69.5	70	357,700
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	32.5	32.5	32	32.5	546,700
First E-Bank Corp.	2.4	2.95	2.4	2.8	2,079,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	44	46	44	45.5	442,600
Philippine National Bank	62	62.5	62	62	4,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.5	12.5	16,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	21.75	21.75	21.5	21.75	53,200
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	300,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1380	1390	1380	1390	500
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1055	1065	1045	1065	58,860
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	33	33	33	33	10,700
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.73	0.73	4,450,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	800	800	800	800	8,490
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0675	0.0675	0.0675	0.0675	13,600,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	100,000
Pldt	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.48	4,000,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	525	525	510	515	73,630
Ivantage Corp.	0.55	0.6	0.55	0.6	420,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	45,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	32.5	33	32.5	32.5	210,400
Manila Electric Co. B	48.5	48.5	48.5	48.5	3,347,400
Petron Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.86	1.86	4,088,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.16	108,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	1,015,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	20,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9	5,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	100,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	100,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.12	2.12	126,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	5,000
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	23.5	23.5	23	23	178,300
RFM Corp.	1.52	1.66	1.52	1.62	7,172,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.9	2.65	1.9	2.3	495,000
San Miguel Corp. A	48	48.5	48	48.5	1,043,500
San Miguel Corp. B	65.5	65.5	65.5	65.5	270,000
Universal Robina Corp.	5	5	4.9	4.9	5,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	30,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.8	555,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.06	2.1	2.06	2.06	529,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.77	0.77	650,000
APC Group Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.135	900,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	59,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	160,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.8	3.6	3.65	966,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.84	0.84	0.81	0.81	3,510,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	50,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	370,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	300,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	2,590,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	800,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	481,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	30,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	33	33.5	32.5	32.5	388,800
Global Equities Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.155	0.155	940,000
Ionics Inc.	7.9	8	7.9	8	7,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	25,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	1,000,000
Medco Holdings	0.18	0.2	0.18	0.2	1,260,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.86	0.87	8,530,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.62	0.7	0.62	0.7	400,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	3,000,000
Music Corp.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.32	2,510,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.88	0.9	0.88	0.9	230,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.37	200,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	50,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	13,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	30,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc	0.26	0.3	0.26	0.3	120,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coal Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	7,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	150,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14	14	14	14	8,500
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.52	0.52	4,420,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	100,000
Manila Jockey Club	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	16,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.38	0.49	0.38	0.43	1,680,000
Philippine Racing Club	4	4.2	4	4.2	4,750,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	28,400
DMCI Holdings Inc- Pref.	795	795	795	795	200
Equitable Pci Bank-War	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	13,000
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	790	790	790	790	690
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0014	0.0016	0.0014	0.0016	18,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series N	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants	0.006	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	87,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7	7	7	7	10,325,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.2	0.24	0.2	0.23	410,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	2,320,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.52	0.52	3,510,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	3,020,000
Filinvest Land Inc	2.3	2.3	2.22	2.22	5,882,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	60,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.4	0.42	0.4	0.41	980,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1	1.04	66,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.8	3,885,000
MINING					
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.04	0.04	0.039	0.039	5,700,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.215	0.21	0.21	900,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.225	0.225	0.215	0.22	3,680,000
Omico Corp.	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	4,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	2,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	500,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0055	0.0056	0.0055	0.0055	67,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0055	0.0056	0.0055	0.0055	61,000,000
Pacifica	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	6,900,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.0725	0.0725	0.07	0.07	4,400,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.2	1,420,000

	SHARE	$	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	3,859,860		132,909,550.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	292,714,110		380,619,860.00
PRO	30,458,000		115,642,200.00
Mining	16,780,000		1,399,000.00
OIL	140,720,000		1,407,650.00
GRAND TOTALS :	484,531,970		631,978,260.00
AVERAGES			
Banks & Fin Svc	584.61		UP 5.05
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,949.14		DOWN 3.24
PRO	627.16		DOWN 1.81
Mining	1,390.57		DOWN 41.25
OIL	1.88		DOWN 0.01
All Shares Index	768.49		DOWN 7.53
Composite	1,432.19		DOWN 0.37

NO. OF ADVANCES: 26; NO. OF DECLINES: 36; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 50; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 112; NO. OF TRADES: 2,521

DISCLOSURES

METROPOLITAN Bank & Trust Co. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 24, 4 p.m. at the Metrobank Plaza auditorium in Makati City. Stockholders of record as of March 20 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ATOK Big Wedge Co. Inc. transferred and conveyed its rights, title and interests over its mining claims and other assets and properties to **Atok Gold Mining Co. Inc.**

* * *

ELECTED officers of **Central Azucarera de Tarlac** were Pedro Cojuangco, president and chair; Josephine Reyes, vice president and treasurer; Jose Cojuangco Jr., vice president; Ernesto Teopaco, vice president; Nereo Mendoza, assistant vice president and assistant treasurer; Emmanuel Cochico, assistant vice president; Arcadio Lopez, secretary, and Fernando Cojuangco, assistant secretary.

* * *

BANCO Filipino Savings and Mortgage Bank will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 8, 5 p.m. at the 9/F of Banco Filipino Building, Makati City. Stockholders of record as of March 18 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

ITOGON-Suyoc Mines Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on April 10, 4 p.m. at the Angono Room of Valle Verde Country Club, Pasig City. Only stockholders of record as of March 1 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Bangladesh, others overtake RP in US garments market

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE MARKET share of Philippine garment manufacturers in the United States has eroded sharply over the last 6 years as rivals in Asia and Latin America—notably Bangladesh, Indonesia and Honduras—got a bigger cut of the world's biggest market for apparel.

A report by the Garments and Textile Export Board showed that the Philippines dropped to No. 11 (based on quantity) and to No. 9 (based on value) among top US apparel makers in 2001. The Philippines ranked No. 7 in both quantity and value six years ago.

The GTEB noted with alarm that Bangladesh, Indonesia and Honduras have surpassed the country in terms of export volume and value of apparel to the United States since 1996 as the Philippines hardly made any improvements during the period.

The Philippines' poor performance also came at an inopportune time as the US market for textiles and apparel surged 80 percent since 1997. The country missed out on a golden opportunity to boost its share in the world's biggest market as proposed reforms in the industry failed to materialize due to politicking by government officials and major industry players.

The GTEB said Philippine apparel makers have become complacent over the last six years while other countries have stepped up their efforts to improve production, lower costs, diversify their product mix, and boost marketing efforts.

The GTEB said foreign buyers found Philippine garments too costly (they are 30 percent more expensive than China); local makers have a longer delivery lead-time (60 to 90 days) and limited value-added services (sewing only); and exporters rely too much on the US market (76 percent of exports).

The GTEB reckoned that if Philippine apparel makers do not shape up, the industry would collapse once US quotas are abolished in 2005.

PNB rehab proposal . . .

From page B1

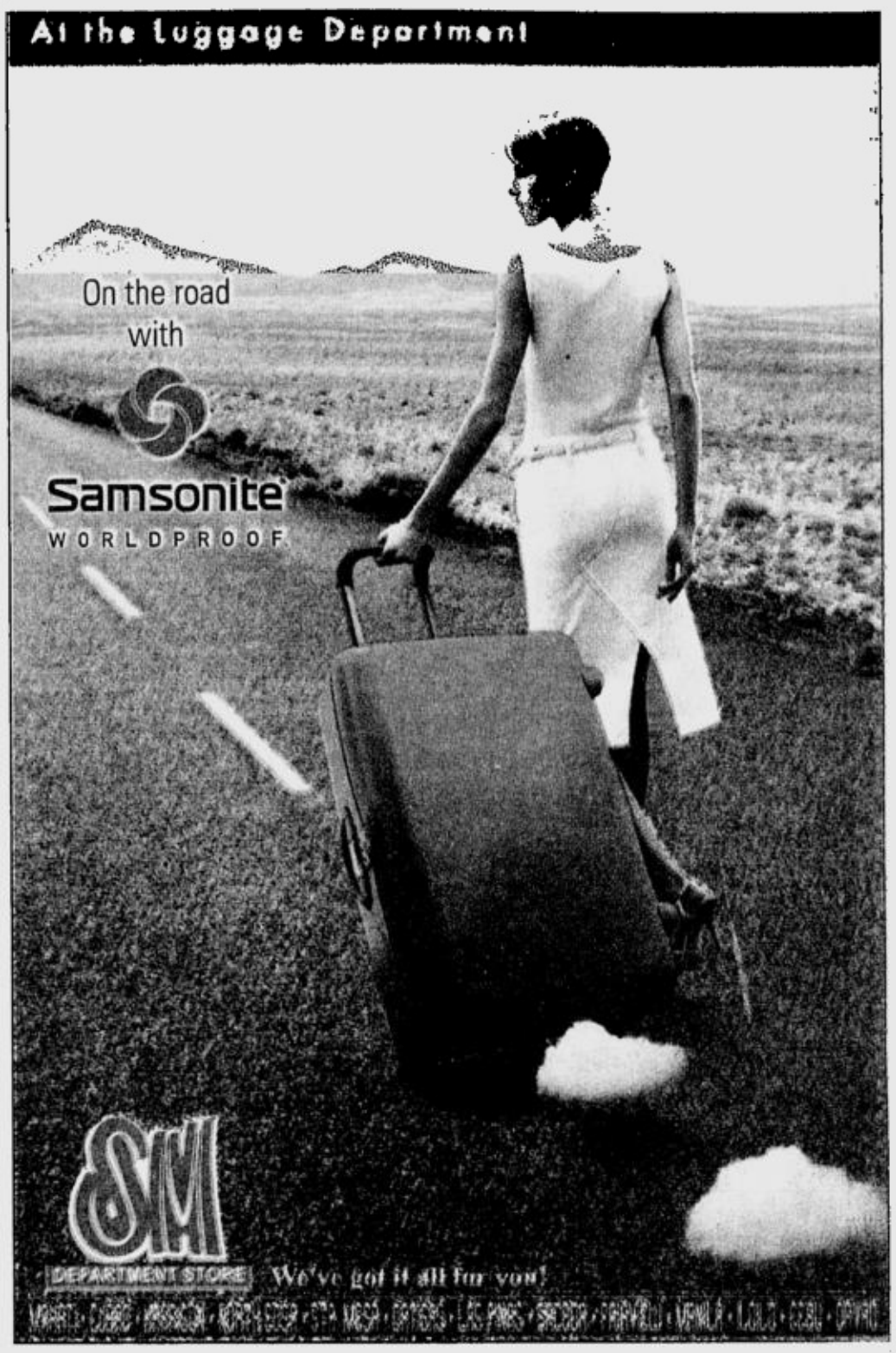
reached P4.5 billion and its bad loans stood at 46 percent of total loans.

The MOA would be more binding than the term sheet forged by the two parties in December. The term sheet contained the details of the debt-to-equity conversion including a P40-per-share conversion price as well as an exit mechanism for both parties.

Once the MOA is signed, the government and Tan would announce the new officers of PNB including the chair, the president and the chief finance officer.

The government had said that it would choose the chair and president from among its four nominees in PNB's 11-member board to replace Norberto Nazareno and Feliciano Miranda.

Sources said the government was considering to appoint seasoned bankers and incumbent PNB directors Francisco Dizon as chair and Vicente Panlilio as president.



Gov't to draw up master list of legal second-hand imports

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry is planning to draw up a catalog of second-hand vehicles, garments and appliances that would be allowed by the government to be brought into the country.

A government source said the DTI would draw up the list with inputs from the domestic producers and importers of pre-owned vehicles, garments and appliances who have clashed on whether government should clamp down or tolerate the influx of second-hand items in the country.

The source said the government realized that a total ban on second-hand imports being sought by domestic producers was unrealistic in view of the vast human and financial resources to enforce the prohibition.

The source said the government felt that restricting the type of second-hand items that could be brought into the country would address the domestic producers' clamor to clamp down on used imports while allowing importers to sustain their trade, albeit, at a much lower scale.

Aside from determining which items could be shipped into the country, the source said the DTI, the producers and the importers would have to agree on a common valuation on these items and the implementation of quality and safety standards.

These measures are meant to address the government's perceived losses from the wide value range of second-hand items and rising complaints on health risks and environment impact of these products.

Domestic manufacturers are clamoring for a ban on the importation of second-hand items because these have started to affect their turnover.

But importers have justified their trade by noting that they provide Filipinos a cheap option in acquiring vehicles, garments and appliances whose brand new prices were beyond the reach of the Filipino masses.

Since the Asian financial crisis in 1997, retail stores peddling used appliances such as color TV and air-conditioners have sprouted in Metro Manila; second-hand clothes were in vogue with the popularity of *ukay-ukay* stores in the provinces; and used vehicles were brought in droves and auctioned off initially in Subic and later to Valenzuela and Malinta in Bulacan.

First e-Bank eyes merger with local bank

FIRST e-Bank Corp., the banking unit of Philippine property firm Metro Pacific Corp., said yesterday that it was in talks with several banks interested to buy or invest in it.

In a disclosure to the exchange, First e-Bank said discussions were at a preliminary stage and no agreement had been reached yet.

"There are indeed exploratory discussions with several interested banks on merger proposals as well as other forms of investment from our shareholders," the bank said.

"Suffice it to say at this time that we seem to be inspiring renewed interest from prospective strategic partners in view of our Philippine Stock Exchange listing and mobile banking capability."

First e-Bank did not identify the banks that were negotiating for a merger.

The bank issued the statement to clarify earlier reports which said that mall tycoon Henry Sy's universal bank Banco de Oro was among the banks seeking a merger with First e-Bank. ***Reuters***

HGC to issue zero coupon bonds worth ₱3B to ₱5B

By Elena R. Torrijos

STATE-OWNED Home Guaranty Corp. is planning to issue P3 billion to P5 billion worth of five-year zero coupon bonds in order to fund its operations amid draw downs on the guarantees it extended on housing and property development projects, sources said.

HGC had issued the terms of reference for the underwriting of the bonds but revised it recently.

The pre-qualification of prospective underwriters was set for later this month. The bonds will carry an unconditional sovereign guarantee and is eligible for agri-agra and liquidity reserve compliance.

HGC reportedly needs to issue the bonds to meet its commitments in light of the failure of the government to infuse the level of capital mandated by the law.

The planned zero-coupon bonds will be the second of its kind to be issued following the government's issuance of the controversial PEACe bonds. The latter, however, have a 10-year maturity.

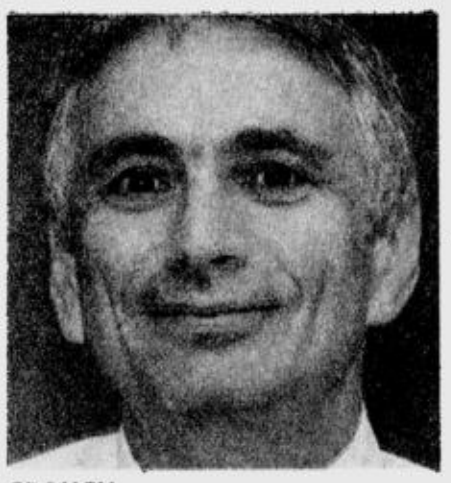
In another development, the government is expected to soon firm up the securitization of P5 billion to P6 billion worth of receivables of local government units in the form of Internal Revenue Allocation.

The Bureau of Treasury will issue a notice of payment schedule for the IRA which will pave the way for the securitization of the LGUs' receivables.

Under the scheme, the notice of payment schedule of the BTr will be put under a special purpose trust of the Development Bank of the Philippines. In turn, the government bank will issue participation certificates. Proceeds from the sale of these certificates will be given to the LGUs.

Investors will be paid as scheduled under the notice issued by the BTr.

The scheme is designed to appease LGUs, which have been demanding for the payment of the IRA.



CROUCH

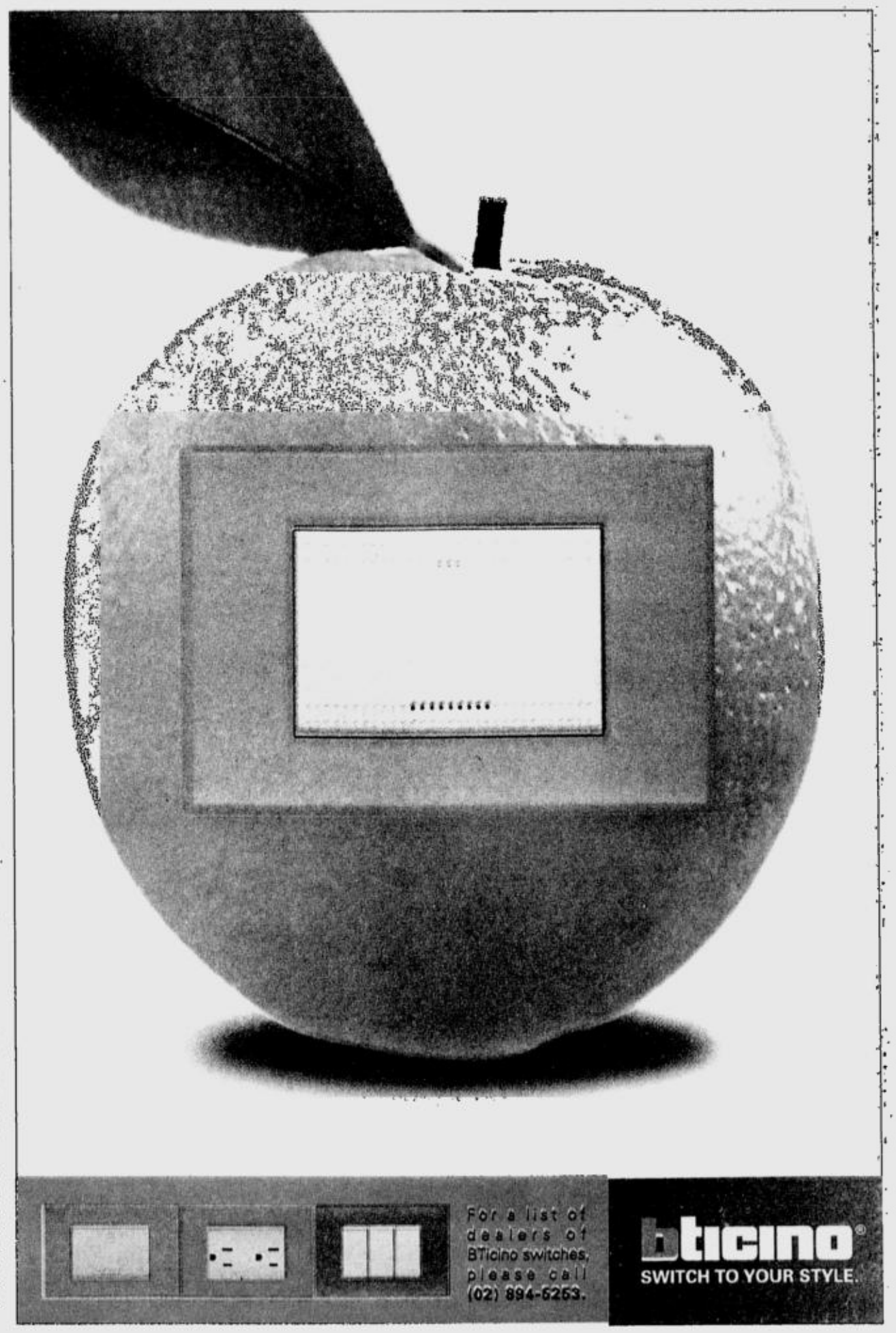
ADB names new chief for RP desk

THE ASIAN Development Bank (ADB) yesterday announced the appointment of Thomas Crouch as the new country director of its Philippine Country Office (PhCO). Crouch takes over from Gunter Hecker, who had recently retired.

An economist with almost 30 years of experience in Asia and the Pacific, Crouch has been with the ADB for 20 years. Crouch is an Australian national and holds a post-graduate degree from the University of Western Australia.

Prior to his appointment, Crouch, who had been involved in initiating ADB's operations in the Greater Mekong Subregion, was the director of the governance, finance, industry, and trade division in ADB's Mekong Department. Before that, he was deputy resident representative and economist in ADB's Indonesia Resident Mission for three years from 1993. Later, he became programs manager for the ADB's operations covering Azerbaijan, Mongolia and the Central Asian Republics until 1999.

The PhCO was established in September 2000 at the ADB's headquarters here, to be dedicated to the ADB's operations in the Philippines. PhCO's major responsibility is to liaise more closely with the government to strengthen the ADB's program and better monitor project implementation to ensure that loans and technical assistance grants achieve their objectives.



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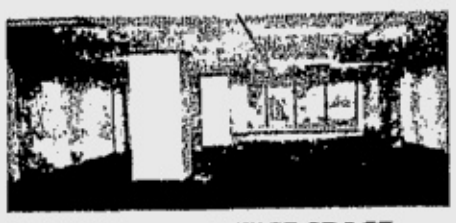

604 sq.m. OFFICE SPACE
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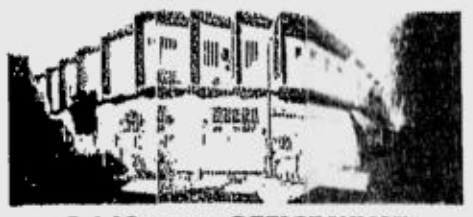

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2231 Pasong tamo St., Makati City
Floor Area: 397.86 sq.m.

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Floor Area: 480 sq.m.

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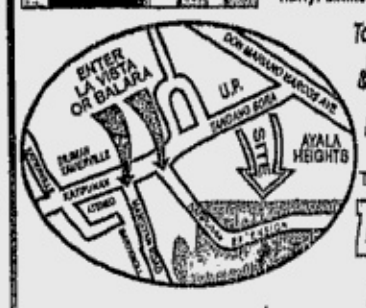

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Yaya Hsemald Cook Driver Mwife 4331140

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

Shih Tzu Grooming Seminar Contact THESS • 899-9192

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

A presumption of death of JUANA CHUA, born on 27 January 1942 in Pasig, Rizal (now Pasig City), has been filed in the Diocesan Matrimonial Tribunal of Lucena by her spouse, CONRADO TAN.

Anyone who has knowledge of her whereabouts or any information as to what might have happened to her is requested to call or write:

THE JUDICIAL VICAR
P.O. Box 60
Lucena City
Tel. # (042) 660-3483

(PDI--Mar. 8, 9 & 10, 2002)

PUBLIC NOTICES

AUCTION SALE

C.Y. Lopez Pawnshop Inc. #602 JP RIZAL ST., MAKATI CITY; #15 GEN. SANTOS AVE., LOWER BICUTAN, TAGUIG; REAL ST. ALMANZA UNO LAS PINAS CITY will hold an Auction Sale on MARCH 16, 2002 at 9:00A.M. including all items pawned up to OCTOBER 2001.
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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of late Felipe N. De Guzman was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. No. 323 Page 66 Book I Series of 2002 before Notary Public Lydia Bundac of Paranaque PDI-March 9, 16 & 23, 2002

NOTICE is hereby given that the estate of the late espouses MELITON and CONCHITA LAGUNDA has been extrajudicially settled among their heirs as per Doc#75, Page#15, Book#X, Series of 2002 of Notary Public J. Reina Rhea L. Bunoan of Quezon City (PDI-Feb. 23, March 2 & 9, 2002)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late GLICERIO F. FUTOL was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc. 219, Page 44, Book XXI, Series of 2001 before notary public of Atty. Eddie Fernandez of Mandaluyong City (PDI- Mar. 2, 9, & 16 2002)

Notice is hereby given that estate of the late Betty C. Tiu has been the subject of extrajudicial settlement of estate among heirs with waiver of rights under Doc No. 457, Page No. 092, Book No. XIV, Series of 2002 in the notarial registry of Atty. Jose V. Marcella. (PDI-Mar. 9, 16 & 23 2002)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late LOURDES B. VILLARANDA was settled extrajudicially by an affidavit of self-adjudication by the sole heirs, as per Doc No.241, Page No. 49, Book No. I, Series of 2002 before Quezon City Notary Public Atty. Bernard Philip C. Claustro (PDI-March 2, 9 & 16, 2002)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given on lost Passport DD535778, Saudi Ticket of DELUSTANCIA V. TORRES stolen on 3 March nr St Joseph Church, Aurora, QC Call 915-6200 if found

Notice is given that Orchard Golf & Country Club Certificate #B-0163 under the name of Anthony Samuel Uy Lee has been declared lost (PDI-Mar. 9,16 & 23 2002)

PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is hereby given that based on the affidavit of Loss of Mr. Henry Lo Lim SM Prime Holdings Inc. Stock Cert No 0080951 Empire East Land Holdings Stock Cert No. 105027 Ayala Land Inc. Stock Cert No 0127277 Manila Electric Co. Stock Cert Nos 283091 & 291502 issued in the name of Henry Lo Lim have been reported Loss. (PDI-Mar. 9, 16 & 23 2002)

Notice is hereby given that Globe Stock Certificate Nos. 387, 2791, 5909, 8260,9979, 29364, 35734, 37699, 42463, 46008, 60695, 72051, 99437, 101197, 8800003236 issued to JACINTO M. MANTARING JR. has been lost. (PDI-Feb. 7, Mar. 1 & 9, 2002)

PERSONAL

Thank you BLESSED MOTHER Malou

MAKE A CAREER CHOICE ONLINE.

Republic of the Philippines
City of Naga
"An Maogmang Lugar"
OFFICE OF THE CITY MAYOR

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

The Naga City Government will receive tenders for the establishment, management and operation of a Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) on a site owned by the city government in Bgy. Balatas, Naga City capable of processing at least 70 tons of mixed garbage daily into organic fertilizers and recyclable materials utilizing mechanical and manual processes and provide employment to at least 100 scavengers in the area.

Interested bidders must submit to the Prequalification, Bids and Awards Committee (PBAC), c/o Environment and Natural Resources Department, City Hall, J. Miranda Ave., Naga City, not later than 5:00 p.m. April 12, 2002 a bidders bond equivalent to 2.5% of their bid proposal and five sets of photocopies of the following documents with each set segregated into three envelopes as follows:

A. Envelope #1: Proponent's profile:
   1. Company profile, list of key officials and organizational structure, duly audited financial statements for the years 1999-2001 or from date of creation until 2001 if established after 1999, articles of incorporation and SEC registration, DENR accreditation if any.
   2. Track record of the company in providing MRF or related waste management facilities, list of previous and on-going projects with certificates of completion issued by clients; pictures, description, cost and contact persons of these projects with their postal address and phone/fax number.

B. Envelope #2: Technical proposal
   1. Detailed description of the technology and processes to be used.
   2. Minimum standards of garbage to be processed, nature and quantity of compost, recyclables and residue to be generated.
   3. Specifications and number of equipment, facilities and buildings required, minimum area for MRF site.
   4. Organizational and management setup of the facility.
   5. Marketing and disposal scheme for end/by-products.
   6. Number of local residents to be directly employed, nature and number of other livelihood opportunities to be generated.
   7. Certificate of site inspection.
   8. Implementation schedule

C. Envelope #3: Financial proposal
   1. Detailed project financing scheme; amount, equipment or facilities to be borne by the city, if any.
   2. Detailed cost recovery scheme, period for the city to recover its investment, if any.

Bidders are required to visit the Balatas site prior to preparation of their proposal. Site visitation and pre-bid conference is scheduled on **March 11, 2002** at 9:00 a.m. at City Hall, Naga City. Envelope #1 will be opened on **April 15, 2002**. Envelope #2 on **April 17, 2002** and Envelope #3 on **April 19, 2002** all at 9:00 a.m. at City Hall, Naga City. For details, call Mr. Oscar Orozco, City Environment and Natural Resources Officer, at (054) 473-0775.

The PBAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or informality therein, to annul or cancel the bidding, and to accept only such bid as it may consider most advantageous to the city government.

(Sgd.) JESSE M. ROBREDO
City Mayor

(PDI - Feb. 23, 25 & Mar. 9, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH COOPERATION
Bldg. No. 3 1st Floor, San Lazaro Compound, Rizal Avenue, Sta. Cruz, Manila 1003
Telefax Nos. 711-96-82 Tel. no. 781-96-43 743-83-01 local 1310, 1311, 1304
e-mail address: bihc@doh.gov.ph , website : emega.doh.gov.ph/bihc

NOTICE

ECDP-02-021

The Department of Health under the Early Childhood Development Project is in need of a consultant (individual) for a short-term assignment as training and logistics coordinator for Regions 6, 7 & 12.

Interested individuals may get a copy of the Terms of Reference from the Early Childhood Development Project Office, Ground Floor, Building 3, San Lazaro Compound Sta. Cruz, Tayuman, Sta. Cruz, Manila. Letters of interest with curriculum vitae and salary history should be submitted on or before 15 March 2002 to the undersigned at the address below:

Office of the Director
Bureau of International Health Cooperation
Department of Health
Ground Floor, Building 3, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz
Manila, Philippines 1003

Should there be further inquiries, you may contact Ms. Sharon Andrea C. Lumpias, Executive Assistant II, Early Childhood Development Project at telefax no. (632) 743-8301 local 1343.

(Sgd.) REMEDIOS V.S. PAULINO
Director III
Officer-In-Charge
Bureau of International Health Cooperation

March 9 & 10, 2002 -- Inquirer

Republic of the Philippines
Department of the Interior and Local Government
National Police Commission
NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS, PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE
PNPCS Canvass and Awards Committee
Camp Crame, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

The PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POLICE COMPUTER SERVICE BIDS AND AWARDS, COMMITTEE invites all interested PNP Accredited Suppliers/ Manufacturers to participate in the bidding of the following:

1. Supply and Installation of AVLS with Radio Base System (Phase II)
2. One (1) Lot FED Computerization Project - Hardware & Software (Phase III)
3. One (1) Lot TMG Computerization Project - Hardware & Software (Phase III)
4. One (1) Lot CFC Reconciliation Computerization Project

The detailed specification of these products will be released during the Pre-Bid Conference scheduled on **Wednesday, March 13, 2002** at 10:00 o'clock in the morning at the Conference Room of the PNP Computer Service in Camp Crame, Quezon City.

For more details, please call up PCI Lampa at Tel. # 725-5108.

(Sgd.) PSSUPT CLAUDIO C. CABREROS
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI--Mar. 7, 8 & 9, 2002)

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REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
Pambansang Korporasyon Sa Elektrisidad
(NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION)

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

SLT-2002-04A

The Southern Luzon Transco (SLT), NPC wishes to invite interested parties to prequalify and to bid on the items listed below:

SCHEDULE		ITEM DESCRIPTION	PR NUMBER
		DATE OF BIDDING: APRIL 01, 2002; 2:00 PM	
A1	1 LOT	RELAY, RESISTOR, CONTACTOR ETC.	3NCS01-052
A2	1 LOT	CONNECTORS AND CLAMPS, ROD	3CSA02-035
A3	1 SET	VARISTOR/SILISTOR	3MAK99-421
A4	6 SETS	CATCHER AND HOLDER	3LAG01-209
A5	1 LOT	CURRENT TRANSFORMER	3LAG01-036
A6	1 LOT	MAGNETIC CONTACTOR, CIRCUIT BREAKER	3NCS01-048
		DATE OF BIDDING: APRIL 02, 2002; 2:00 PM	
B1	1 UNIT	LIQUID CHILLER COMPRESSOR	3NCS01-022
B2	2 PCS	EXTENSION LADDERS	3NCS01-119
B3	10 UNITS	OVER-CURRENT & AUTO RECLOSER	PSMD-N02-041
B4	1 UNIT	PRIMARY INJECTION TEST SET	3PTG02-006
B5	1 LOT	TRANSCEIVER UNIT, CD STOMPER, DRIVE	3PTG02-018
B6	1 LOT	CONTINUOUS FORMS	3PTG02-023
B7	1 LOT	UTP CABLE, SWITCH	3PTG02-034
		DATE OF BIDDING: APRIL 03, 2002; 2:00 PM	
C1	72 PCS	BEARING, BALL #631822, KOYO OR EQUIV.	3MAK02-121
C2	1 LOT	PNEUMATIC DOUBLE ACTING VALVE ACTUATOR, KOSO JAPAN OR EQUIV.	3MAK02-112
C3	1 LOT	RESIN, STYRENE, COBALT, HARDENER	3TIW02-04

NOTE: A Pre-Bidding Conference will be held for the following bidding schedules on:
1) B3 - **March 18, 2002**; 9:00 a.m. at SLRO Bidding Room
2) B4 - **March 18, 2002**; 10:00 a.m. at SLRO Bidding Room

Schedules C1-C3 bidding shall be handled by GENCO-6 Materials Management Section. Bid documents can be obtained from their office at San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna.

Complete sets of bidding documents and other particulars may be obtained from the Office of the Manager, Administration Division, SLRC, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P25.00 and P50.00 per schedule for single and two envelope, respectively starting **March 12, 2002**. No bid documents will be issued on the date of bidding.

Non-accredited suppliers can get prequalification papers and submit the same for evaluation not later than **March 20, 2002** before they are allowed to bid.

Only those prequalified shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. Bids will be received at the SLRC Bidding Room, NPC-SLRC, San Vicente, Biñan, Laguna until 2:00 o'clock p.m. on the dates specified above after which said bids will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

All bids regardless of price offer must be accompanied by Bidder's Bond in Cash or Certified Manager's/Cashier's Check, or a GSIS Surety Bond equivalent to five percent (5%) of the total bid price.

The NPC-SLRC reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligations to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the grounds for the NPC-SLRC's action.

(Sgd) R.D. RAMAS
MANAGER ADMINISTRATION
TRANSCO SOUTH

(PDI - March 9, 2002)

PNOC PETROCHEMICAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
(A WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL COMPANY)

11/F BA Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, 1227 Makati City, Philippines — Tel. No. (02) 841-0844, Telefax No. (02) 810-6418
Brgy. Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan — Tel. No. (047) 244-7441, Telefax No. (047) 244-5583

INVITATION FOR QUALIFICATION / ELIGIBILITY AND BIDDING

The PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation (PPDC) invites interested contractors currently accredited with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) in good standing to apply for qualification / eligibility and if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the following project described below:

I. Work Order No. : WSC-01-002
II. Project Title : Jetty Firefighting Facilities Modification Project (Module I)
III. Scope of Work : Supply of labor, materials, tools and other necessary equipment to complete the Phase I Works. Works to include supply and installation of the proposed remote operated fire monitor, relocation of existing fire motor and modification of fire main pipe.
IV. Project Location : Petrochemical Industrial Estate (PIE) in Limay and Mariveles, Bataan, Philippines
V. Approved Budget : Pesos Nine Million Two Hundred Six Thousand Five Hundred Seventy Nine and 47/100 (P9,206,579.47)
VI. Source of Funding : PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation
VII. Estimated Contract Duration : Two Hundred Ten (210) Calendar Days
VIII. PCAB License Minimum Requirement
Registration Qualifications
Kinds of Project : Mechanical Work and Water Supply
Size Range : Medium A Medium A
IX. Similar Contracts : Mechanical Works, Water Supply
X. Credit Line / Cash Deposit Certificate Requirement : Pesos Nine Hundred Twenty Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Seven & 95/100 (P920,657.95)
XI. Eligibility Statement Forms : One (1) set each to be filled up and submitted for every project.
Cost of Forms : One Hundred Pesos each set (P 100.00/set)
Date and Time of Issuance : March 11-22, 2002 from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Place of Issuance and Submission of Accomplished Eligibility Statements/ Documents : PNOC - Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B.A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department
or
PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan c/o Site Administration Department
Deadline of Submission : On or before April 01, 2002 at 3:00 p.m.
XII Notice of Eligibility/Ineligibility
Date and Time of Issuance : March 25 - April 22, 2002 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Place of Issuance : PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B.A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department
XIII. Pre-bid Conference
Date and Time : May 16, 2002 at 10:00 a.m.
Venue : PPDC Conference Room PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan c/o Site Administration Department
XIV. Bid/Tender Documents : Shall be issued only to eligible contractors upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents.
Cost of Documents : One Thousand Pesos each set (P1,000.00/set)
Date and Time of Issuance : April 23 - May 08, 2002 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Place of Issuance : PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B.A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department
or
PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan c/o Site Administration Department
Deadline of Submission : On or before June 07, 2002 at 1:30 p.m.
Place of Submission : PNOC-Petrochemical Development Corporation 11th Floor, B.A. Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City c/o Legal, Contracts and Administration Department

XV. BID OPENING IN THE SAME VENUE WILL FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DEADLINE OF SUBMISSION OF BIDS. LATE BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Prospective bidders are required to submit original copy of Credit Line / Cash Deposit Certificate/s and original copies of pertinent documents such as Contractor's PCAB License, audited Financial Statements, etc. for verification/ authentication purposes.

All particulars relative to pre-qualification / eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of PD 1594 and its Implementing Rules and Relations, as amended, and other applicable rules and regulations.

PPDC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or informality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s were considered most advantageous to PPDC. PPDC further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or loss that may incur in the preparation of their bids nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) VICTORIO MARIO A. DIMAGIBA
BAC - Chairman

(PDI--Mar. 9, 13 & 18, 2002)

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HEAD OFFICE
897-8808 loc. 514, 516;
899-4425; 897-2535
897-8425 (Telefax)

CUBAO
912-9008 to 11 (Aurora)

MAKATI
892-5578; 811-4361;
811-4370

KALAW
528-0213; 527-3342

MEGAMALL
635-0219; 635-0220

MAYNILAD WATER SERVICES, INC.
MWSS Compound, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Tel. No. 435 33 66 or 920 55 21 loc. 3600/Fax No. 928-23-03
28 February 2002

INVITATION TO BID FOR DISPOSAL OF MATERIALS

Gentlemen:

The Maynilad Water Services, Inc. (MWSI) is inviting all interested bidders to participate in the bidding for the disposal of various Cast Iron Fittings.

Bid documents can be secured at the MWSI-Purchasing Department, MWSS Building, Basement, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City.

The actual inspection of the items can be made from March 11 to 21, 2002 in coordination with the MWSI-Purchasing Department, at the MWSI-Socea Bona, Novaliches.

Bid shall be submitted in a sealed envelope at the Purchasing Department, **on or before March 22, 2002 (Friday); 5:00 PM.** Award will be based on the highest bid received.

Finally, MWSI reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason/s, waive any and all informalities therein, and accept the bid it deems most advantageous to the MWSI.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) IGNACIO B. GIMENEZ
AVP, Corporate Logistics

(PDI--Mar 8 & 9, 2002)

National Steel Corporation

INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS TO BUY

National Steel Corporation is inviting offers to purchase by way of sealed proposals, for cash and on "as-is-where-is" basis, the following assets:

ASSET DECRIPTION	LOCATION
1 LOT PASIG PLANT ITEMS (CONSISTING OF BUILDINGS, MACHINERIES AND EQUIPMENT, EXCLUDING CANTEEN, BASKETBALL COURT AND PIER CRANE CANTILEVER)	Bo. Kalawaan Sur, Pasig City

Terms and conditions of the sale are available at National Steel Corporation, Tel. Nos. (02) 752-4494 to 98.

Deadline for the submission of proposals will be on Friday, at 4:00 PM, **March 22, 2002**, addressed to:

Atty. Danilo L. Concepcion
Liquidator, National Steel Corporation
Unit 2701, 88 Corporate Center Building
141 Sedeno Street corner Valero Street
Salcedo Village, Makati City

All proposals will be opened after the deadline for submission.

A performance bond amounting to at least ten percent (10%) of the price offer shall be required to be submitted simultaneous to the submission of bid, NSC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, to waive any formality found therein, and to accept such proposals as may be considered most advantageous to its interest.

(PDI -- Mar. 9, 2002)

People, Events & Products

aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Aries Espinosa, Editor

Local food producers urged to improve, increase supply

A TOP OFFICIAL of a food distribution company recently hailed the proposal of the Department of Trade and Industry for major food chains to source their requirements from local producers.

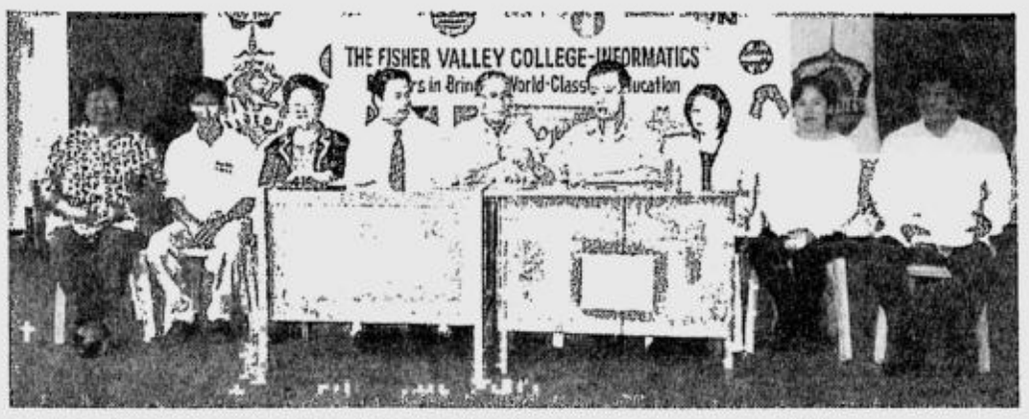
Maritess Concepcion, president of CSP International, said that the initiative of Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II was timely, considering the slowdown in the economy. However, she also urged local producers to improve their operations in terms of product quality and pricing to compete effectively with foreign suppliers.

Concepcion has just been elected president of the Meat Importers and Traders Association (Mita), whose members supply most of the requirements of the food service sector and processing companies. Also elected officers for 2002 were Jess Cham of Mayon Consolidated, VP-director; K. Laygo of Bestmatch Enterprises, director-treasurer; David Kawpeng of Edan Corp., director-secretary; Benjie Caballero of CTC, Vicky Choi of PTC and Doris Pradas of Virgo, directors.

According to Concepcion, most food chains already source their major requirements locally, such as vegetables, beverages and bakery products but they also import part of their meat and poultry needs because domestic supply is either inadequate or irregular.

She said that members of Mita are aware that their major role in the economy is to ensure that they are able to fill in shortages in production and supply promptly.

In the end, consumers stand to benefit in terms of consistent product quality and stable prices under such a setup, Concepcion added.



TFVC-INFORMATICS COMPUTER ED PARTNERSHIP

Informatics computer education is now offered at the Fisher Valley College. The two parties recently signed the partnership agreement at the Fisher Valley College Quadrangle in Taguig, Metro Manila. Shown at the signing, from left, were Delia T. Uy, high school principal, Fitzgerald M. Yap, vice president-administrator, Rebecca M. Yap, school directress, Marvin C. Castro, college director of TFVC, lawyer Ronald R. Yap, president of TFVC, Daniel T. Ho, Informatics franchisee, Karen Sy Ho, managing director of Informatics Pasig, Rowena Grace Y. Castro, VP for academic affairs of TFVC, and lawyer Rene Elivazo, legal counsel of TFVC.

MISS JAPAN VISITS ARKDIA

Miss Japan 2001 Noami Nomata recently visited Arkdia, the newest concert venue in Malate, as part of her tour of the Philippines sponsored by Philippine Airlines through country manager for Asia Bong Velasquez. Miss Japan is an MBA student in a Tokyo university. With her, from left, are Chris Sanchez, operations manager; Con Paz, events manager; Mike Ynfante, PR manager, and Rene Trinidad, VP for operations. Also at the dinner for Miss Japan was Calo Bello, PAL coordinator. Arkdia is owned by H.K. Com Entertainment, a Filipino-Japanese partnership with Joseph 'Jong' Garcia as president and CEO.

'HI-TECHI-DELIC' FASHION DOLLS

Meet the Diva Starz, three super-iffic dolls from the super-iffic company who brought Barbie, Matchbox, and Hot Wheels, Mattel. Mattel just launched the most 'hi-techi-delic' dolls in the Philippines with special features like infrareds capable of interacting with other diva dolls, sensors that recognize what the diva wears, an internal clock that serves as a great reminder of diva activities, microphones that listen to kids and reacts to voices, hair sensors that respond to hair styling and head-patting, and Yes and No buttons for kids to interact with their divas. These fashionable dolls come in with colorful attitudes. Here seen is Summer together with Alexa and Nikki, and they know what's up. Whatever your own mood and attitude, the Diva Starz can be your friend. Feeling sporty and rugged? Nikki can be a great companion. Glamor, fashion, and style is Alexa's forte. Summer loves nature and Mother Earth. Diva Starz also comes in a collector's doll series with cool accessories, a plush dolls series that's huggable. Meet them at the stores and collect them all. The Diva Starz are available at SM Toy World and Toy Kingdom stores nationwide. Check out www.divastarz.com and www.richwell.net.

1st AMA IT Olympiad cites regional champions

AMA IT Olympiad 2002 has commenced its regional competition and announces the winners from 42 private and public high schools nationwide that competed over the weekend vying for the National Championship round to be held today at the Grand Ballroom of Hotel Rembrandt in Quezon City.

With the onset of new technologies fast coming in the country, Education Secretary Raul Roco anticipates the advantages of this intellectual race for Filipino students and how it will draw further interest on information and technology among the youth.

Science and Technology Secretary Estrelita Alabastro likewise recognizes the new breed of geniuses who are seen with great potentials on becoming world-class professionals and leaders in engineering, computer science and information management.

"The IT Olympiad is a good venue for us to discover the technological competencies of our high school students. There is a great possibility that our students today can compete internationally and excel above the rest for as long as the private sector and the government are working together for the technological advancement of our students," said Alabastro.

Through the initiative of AMA Computer University, in partnership with the Amable M. Aguiluz Sr. Foundation and the Department of Science and Technology (DOST), this first and only nationwide competition in IT was created to primarily hone the tech-skills and scientific capabilities of young Filipino students.

The regional winning teams (schools) cited were Mater Carmelli High School for NCR North, Sienna College of Taytay for NCR South, Mangaldan National High School for Region I, Cagayan State University for Region II, Holy Angel University for Region III, Canossa Academy of San Carlos, Lipa City for Region IV, Tabaco National High School for Region V, Iloilo National High School for Region VI, and University of San Carlos for Region VII, Phil. Science High School for Region VIII, Zamboanga AE Memorial Science High School for Region IX, St. Mary's School for Region X, Davao National High School for Region XI, Albert Einstein School for Region XII, and St. Louis University for CAR.

All regional champions, aside from bringing home big cash prizes and special scholarship grants, will enjoy an all-expense paid trip to Manila, hotel accommodation and an educational tour at the 1st and largest IT University in Asia – AMA Computer University in Project 8, Quezon City campus.

The emerging AMA IT Olympiad 2002 National Team Champion will receive P100,000 and a trophy for their school, a cash prize of P25,000 plus three full-scholarship grants at AMA Computer University/College for each team member and P30,000 for the coach. First and second runner-ups will also receive cash prizes, scholarship grants and trophies.

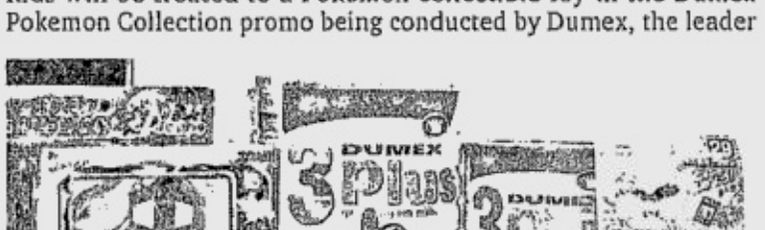
MALINIS GRACES PLIA INDUCTION

Jaime C. Fernandez, newly inducted president of the Philippine Life Insurance Association (Plia), the umbrella organization of life insurance companies in the Philippines, presents a token of appreciation to insurance commissioner lawyer Eduardo T. Malinis, who was the guest of honor, speaker, and inducting officer of Plia's directors, officers and chairpersons for 2002. The event was held at the Makati Sports Club recently. The officers and directors of Plia for 2002 are Jaime C. Fernandez, president, Alfonso P. Garcia, Jr., vice president, Conrado S. de la Cruz, secretary, Ernesto R.D. Villareal, Jr. treasurer, and directors Ramon J. Abejuela, Reynaldo C. Centeno, Peter G. Coyiuto, Felipe R. Diego, and Danilo M. Mercado, Jr.

Product FILES

Dumex Pokemon collection

Kids will be treated to a Pokemon collectible toy in the Dumex Pokemon Collection promo being conducted by Dumex, the leader



in infant and child nutrition in many parts of Asia. Under the promo, children will receive a Pokemon collectible toy with every purchase of Dumex 3Plus Growing up Milk 800 or 900 g, while a battery-powered Pokemon toy will be given out with every purchase of Dumex 3 Plus Growing up Milk 1.6 or 1.8 kg. There are over 25 Pokemon characters to collect. The promo is being conducted in all leading supermarkets and Mercury Drug stores.

Abenson SM City carpark reopens

A NEW and better appliance shopping awaits the North Edsa folks as Abenson's branch at the Cyberzone in SM City Carpark extension reopened recently just in time for the summer season. The branch boasts of newly renovated interiors and latest and wider product displays.

It's just one of the great reasons to visit the outlet. Abenson's complete line of audio-video products, home appliances and electronics will surely leave you mesmerized, and the unparalleled sales force assistance from Abenson personnel completes the picture.

Abenson has more than 40 branches to give you the same level of service you've loved. Go north and Abenson awaits.

Clips

Writing a book seminar

THE ATV Speakers Network is conducting a program titled "How to Write and Publish Your Book" today, March 9, 1 to 5 p.m. Topics include: Why Write a Book, Getting Started, Deciding on the Subject Matter, Determining Readership, Gathering Materials, Writing Clearly, Drafting, Revising and Editing the Book, Financing the Project, Copyright Rules and Procedures, and Marketing the Book. For details, call Liezl or Josie at 896-8790.

VILLAGRACIA

US NCLEX passer

LYNN Seguerra Villagracia, the eldest daughter of lawyer Aure and Nora Villagracia of Occidental Mindoro and Talisay, Cebu, successfully hurdled the NCLEX exams given January 2002 in Minnesota, United States. It was her first attempt at the exams. She is a graduate of the University of Santo Tomas college of nursing.

JICC accepting applications

THE JAPAN Information and Cultural Center (JICC), Embassy of Japan, is now accepting applications for the following Japanese Government (Monbukagakusho) Scholarships for 2002 and 2003: In-Service Training for Teachers Scholarship; Japanese Studies Scholarship; Research Scholarship Leading to a Master's Degree or a Ph.D.; Undergraduate Scholarship; College of Technology Scholarship, and Professional Training School (Senshu-Gakko) Scholarship. To be eligible to receive these scholarships, applicants must be citizens of the Philippines and must be willing to study in Japan. Applicants must also have good academic backgrounds, be physically and mentally healthy, and be ready to depart for Japan in either early April or early October 2003, or in early October 2002 if they are applying for the In-Service Training for Teachers or the Japanese Studies Scholarships. Deadlines for submission of application forms are March 25 for the In-Service Training and Japanese Studies Scholarships, and May 20 for all other scholarships. For more information, call JICC at 551-5710, (032) 255-0287 in Cebu, or (082) 221-3100 in Davao.

SAIGON FAMILIARIZATION TOUR

Saigon (Ho Chi Minh), in south Vietnam, is more than the title of a popular Broadway musical. It also offers a variety of tourist attractions such as historical sites like the Cu Chin Tunnel, the War Memorabilia Museum, the Reunification Palace, an elegant, cultural ambience with the French-styled Notre Dame Cathedral; the Mekong Delta with its floating market and sampan rides, and bargain shopping that rivals Hong Kong and Bangkok. A group from Philippine Airlines and Las Palmas Tours and Travel recently went there on a familiarization tour. The group is shown at the Cu Chin Tunnel Network.

Romantic releases from MSV

ROMANCE is in the air, so they say. So, now is the time to experience the magic of love in its purest essence. It's just around us—all you need is to open your hearts and let the feeling go all the way. To start with, read a pocketbook that's considerably one of the hottest items you can get and share with your special someone. Just make sure that it's under the label of Bookware Publishing Corp.'s My Special Valentine (MSV), which, in case you didn't know, is driving readers of all sorts crazy about love anytime of the day.

Dare? This week, the so-called most romantic releases include the new titles, "Say You'll be Mine", "Magkano ang Puso Mo?", "It Must be Love", "Be True to Me", "Abutin Mo ang Langit", "A Night to Remember", Bumalik Ka sa Akin", "To Win Your Love", "Hindi Kaibigan Lang", "Love Me Like the First Time", "Hawiin Mo ng Pag-Ibig ang Dilim", and "Sweet Haven".

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Greenspan says US expansion 'well under way'

WASHINGTON—Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan on Thursday declared the US recession over and said an expansion was already "well under way"—a brighter economic picture than he painted just a week ago.

The Fed chief told the Senate Banking Committee, in a rare and unexpected revision to his formal semiannual testimony to a House of Representatives panel on Feb. 27, that the upbeat economic news of the past few days was encouraging.

But he retained a note of caution, telling lawmakers during questioning the recovery would "almost certainly" not log the growth rates of rebounds from past recessions—which he said typically averaged around 7 percent. He also said business spending was a cause for concern.

"The recent evidence increasingly suggests that an economic expansion is already well under way, although an array of influences unique to this business cycle seems likely to moderate its speed," Greenspan said.

The Fed chair increased optimism signaled to many economists that the central bank could use its meeting on March 19 to shift its public stance on economic risks—saying they are balanced between economic weakness and rising inflation rather than weighted toward the threat of softness.

Such a shift could preface an eventual rise in interest rates from current 40-year lows, an increase some analysts say could come as soon as mid-year.

Blue-chip stocks and the technology-rich Nasdaq composite ended lower as investors fretted about the future of interest rates. Treasury bonds sold off sharply with long-term bond yields spiking to eight-month highs on fears rate rises may loom in the not-too-distant future.

Other Fed officials on Thursday echoed Greenspan's tune.

New York Fed president William McDonough told a banking group in New York that many segments of the economy have improved. But he warned that it would take some time to recover the 1.4 million jobs lost since last March.

"Besides overall real GDP (gross domestic product) growth, there are other signals that we may be on the upswing of the cycle," said San Francisco Fed president Robert Parry.

"(Greenspan's) decision is a pretty good signal that the balance of risks statement (on March 19) is going to be altered from one favoring economic weakness to a balanced view," said economist Peter Kretzmer at Bank of America in New York. ***Reuters***

Japan's economy shrinks for third straight quarter

TOKYO—Japan's economy shrank 1.2 percent in the final quarter of 2001, the first time in nearly a decade that output has fallen three quarters in a row, as business investment logged its biggest quarterly fall on record, government data showed on Friday.

The slide in gross domestic product in the three months to December, compared to the previous quarter, translated into an annualized fall of 4.5 percent, slightly worse than economists had expected. For all of 2001, the economy shrank 0.5 percent.

"It's a very serious recession," said Takashi Kiuchi, economic adviser at Shinsei Bank, although some economists saw some hope in a 1.9-percent rise in personal consumption, the biggest and most stubbornly weak area of the economy.

The figures also reflected the full impact on the world's second biggest economy of the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States and a confidence-denting outbreak of mad cow disease in Japan.

Business investment fell 12 percent in the quarter, the biggest slide ever under calculations dating back to 1980.

Government officials said, however, that capital spending may be better than the data suggested because of the comparison with a relatively strong July-September quarter, and they said Japan could see a recovery in the fiscal year starting April 1.

"We shall see a self-sustained recovery in our economy in fiscal 2002," said Vice Economics Minister Yuzo Kobayashi. "Some of it will be due to cyclical factors and the recovery in the US economy may also help."

But the deepening of Japan's third recession in a decade could raise pressure on Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to unveil stronger steps to restore growth in a second installment of anti-deflation steps expected as early as April.

"The GDP was poor, as expected. Having seen such a big decline, the government may have to come up with stronger measures to fight deflation," said Takeshi Minami, strategist at UFJ Capital Markets Securities.

Separate data released on Friday suggested deflation, which the government blames for crippling the banking system and stifling growth, worsened in February.

Wholesale prices fell 1.3 percent from a year earlier—the 17th straight month of decline.

Beyond the figures

The yen and stock prices continued to march higher after the data release as traders and economists looked beyond the figures, taking heart from recent signs that Japan's biggest trading partner, the United States, is in recovery mode.

"The stock market will shrug it off because it represents what happened in the past," said Kazunori Jinnai, a general manager at Daiwa Securities SMBC.

The Nikkei average has rebounded 24 percent from an 18-year low on Feb. 6, while the yen has climbed for the past six days against the dollar, surging 2.5 percent on Thursday to its highest level since December.

The Nikkei was up 0.73 percent at 11,733.56 at midday.

The yen, a key to Japan's export competitiveness, stood at 127.75 against the dollar compared to 127.80 before the numbers were announced but down from 127.10 late in New York on Thursday when it posted its biggest gain since March 2001.

"The forex movement at the moment is too rapid and problematic," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda said, adding it could make life difficult for international trade.

Economists, however, said that while a short-term uptick in the economy might be expected, long-term problems remained.

Japan's GDP last shrank for three straight quarters in 1993, but the contraction in two of those quarters was smaller than 0.01 percent, making the current downturn the deepest since the dark years following the end of the World War II. ***Reuters***

Moody's splits structured finance group into 3 teams

NEW YORK—Bond rating service Moody's Investors Service said on Wednesday it split its structured finance group into three teams to focus on specific products within this growing area of the financial market.

The new group structure is in effect immediately, said Noel Kirnon, Moody's group managing director of structure finance.

The realignment will allow Moody's to better service clients in this burgeoning market, he said. Structured finance includes deals that repackage debt into securities, such as asset-backed securities.

Bill May and Isaac Efrat will be co-head of the team that oversees derivatives, structured notes, and synthetic collateralized debt obligations (CDOs). May was promoted to team managing director from senior vice president.

Gus Harris will take charge of team that oversees research and monitoring of cash-flow CDOs.

Jerry Gluck will head a team that oversees resecuritization, market value products, and new asset classes.

All the teams will report to Kirnon. ***Reuters***

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Pacita Villanueva de los Santos

November 17, 1909 - March 7, 2002

peacefully joined her Creator
and her dearly beloved husband ***Jose***
at the age of 92.

Her body now lies in state at the Mt. Carmel Chapel, Doña Juana Rodriguez Avenue, Broadway, New Manila, Quezon City.

She will be brought to her final resting place in Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina on Sunday, March 10, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass which will be held at the Chapel.

We, her CHILDREN **Efren** and **Josie Hidalgo**, **Naida** and **Ramon Curameng**, **Sonia**, **Joey**, **Stephanie**; together with her GRANDCHILDREN, GREAT GRANDCHILDREN, and other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

In lieu of flowers, we welcome donations to the JOSE V. DE LOS SANTOS FOUNDATION.

"Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest."
Matthew 11:28

Glenn R. Cortes

March 21, 1966 - March 7, 2002
Joined his Creator at the age of 35.

His body now lies in state at St. Joseph Chapel,
Mt. Carmel Shrine Parish,
Doña Juana Rodriguez Avenue, Broadway,
New Manila, Quezon City.

We, his family

wife **Rosanna Yuseco Cortes**
parents **Edmundo V. Cortes** and **Elnora R. Cortes**
parents-in-law **Bobby P. Yuseco** and **Hortensia Z. Yuseco**
brothers and sisters **Lemmon, Gina, Ken, Patrick** and **Tinette**
together with his nephews and nieces **Punay, Isabella,**
Antonella, Joaquin, Patricia, Alyssa
and **Polo**

request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment will be at the Himlayang Pilipino on Tuesday, March 12, 2002
right after the 9:00 o'clock a.m. Mass.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

AMADA REVILLA DISONGLO

Who joined our Lord and Creator
on February 25, 2002.

Sincerely convey our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy, gave donations, visited and kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and days of prayers and who, in countless and immeasurable ways, condoled with and comforted us in our moment of grief.

MAY THE GOOD LORD BLESS ALL OF YOU.

ALICIA AMEMITA SANTOS

who died in the Grace of our Lord
on March 3, 2002 at the age of 75.

Her remains lie in state at Parkhomes Chapel, Tunasan, Muntinlupa City.

Interment will be at Everest Hills Memorial Park, Muntinlupa, March 9, 2002, 9:00 AM.

Her family wish to thank all their relatives and friends who offered their condolences and prayers during their moment of grief.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES

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❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY REQUIEMS
FREE OBIT DESIGN

The Lord is my shepherd; I have everything I need. He lets me rest in fields of green grass and leads me to quiet pools of fresh water. He gives me new strength. He guides me in the right paths, as he has promised. Even if I go through the deepest darkness, I will not be afraid, Lord, for you are with me. Your shepherd's rod and staff protect me.

You prepare a banquet for me, where all my enemies can see me; you welcome me as an honored guest and fill my cup to the brim. I know that your goodness and love will be with me all my life; and your house will be my home as long as I live.

Manuel 'Maning' P. De Leon

Artist • Art Director • Designer

On the 27th of February 2002 at 7:45 p.m., he peacefully completed his journey on Earth at the age of 76. With deep affection and prayers, his family and friends wish him well as he is now at home in the embrace of God. A lifetime devoted to art produced a master stroke of love with wife **Clarita** and his children **Cecille, Cynthia and Oscar Garcia, Manolete and Yvette, Melchor and Daday, Clarissa and Ronald Banania, Celeste, Marvin and Imelda,** and **Menandro.** A true brother to **Pura Vallejo, Fely Payumo,** and **Naty Ramirez.** An ever thoughtful uncle to **Dr. Alex and Dr. Violy Sinavsky, Amy, Heide, Karen; Hermes and Menchu Vallejo, Hermes Jr., Patricia,** and to all nephews and nieces. A most caring grandfather to **Arnold, Ryan, Michael, Mark, Ezraella, Missy, Romaine, JR, Camille, Carmela, Martin, Madonna,** and **Menalyn.**

We request those whose lives have been painted with colorful memories of our late **Papa** to pray for the peace and tranquility of his soul as he is born into Eternal Life.

His remains will lie in state at the Christ the King Church, Green Meadows Avenue, Q.C. beginning 10th of March 2002.

Interment is on Wednesday, 13th of March 2002 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City after the Requiem Mass at the Christ the King Church at 2:00 p.m.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
Matthew 10:39

DOLORES DY-LIACCO IMPERIAL

Peacefully joined our Creator on March 7, 2002 at the age of 97.

Her children **Mariano & Minda, Isabel & Bienvenido, Raquel & Amador, Erlinda & Benjamin, Perlita & Jose;** grandchildren, relatives and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie at Christ the King, Green Meadows, Quezon City.

Interment will be on March 12, 2002 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

We've added another dignified service to keep the memory of your departed loved ones.

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*"In my Father's house are many rooms
I am going there to prepare a place for you
I will come back and take you to be with me
That you may also be where I am." JOHN 14:2-3*

GOD HAS CALLED HOME OUR BELOVED MAMA

LAURA MANZANO Y JOSUE

(September 11, 1913 - March 7, 2002)
Of Tagudin, Ilocos Sur & Meycauayan, Bulacan

AND REUNITED HER WITH OUR BELOVED PAPA

JAIME G. MANZANO, SR.

AFTER RECEIVING THE LAST SACRAMENT AT THE AGE OF 88

HER REMAINS LIE IN STATE AT CHAPEL-C, FUNERARIA PAZ, ARANETA AVENUE, QUEZON CITY.
HOLY MASS AT 10:00 A.M., MARCH 14, 2002. CREMATION AT 2:00 P.M.

PLEASE PRAY FOR HER ETERNAL REPOSE.

With Much Gratitude From Her Bereaved Family:

CHILDREN: ANTONIO†, ROSE & JAIME ZAMORA, JIMMY, JR., GERRY & MELLY PIRA, MA. CECILIA†, MAYETTE MANZANO, BOBBY & BABY MANZANO, RICKY & MAUREEN MANZANO.

GRANDCHILDREN: VOHN & OYIE LUGTU, MARLON & ELLEN VILLARINO, ROMMEL & LYN ZAMORA; KOKOY & DORY PIRA, KIT & CLAUDINE RAMIREZ, PEACHES PIRA; NOEL MANZANO; JUN†, TATA, JENNY, MARIE, BOOGIE & CAMILLE MANZANO; HAPPY & J.I. MANZANO.

GREAT GRANDCHILDREN: CHESKA, GIDEON, JC, DANA, ARIEL, JOBEN & KAYLA.

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SCIENCE/HEALTH

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang** ● *Assistant Editor* **Stella O. Gonzales**

A stroke is not a heart attack

By Charles E. Buban

ILLUSTRATION:STEPH BRAVO

MOST people think stroke and heart attack are the same and use the two terms interchangeably. Although both heart attack and stroke are caused by cardiovascular disease and are life-threatening, it is important to distinguish one from the other because it can mean a difference in undertaking the proper action during medical emergencies.

One of the biggest obstacles to emergency treatment is that many people don't even know they are having a stroke.

In fact, a University of Cincinnati report said 52 percent of its acute stroke patients were unaware they were experiencing a stroke.

"Majority of patients don't report to the emergency room until more than 24 hours had passed after the onset of stroke symptoms," the report said.

It suggests educating the public to treat stroke as a brain attack and to seek immediate treatment, which is crucial because every minute lost cuts into the limited window of opportunity for intervention.

Brain attack

As opposed to a heart attack, a stroke is a "brain attack." It occurs when a blood clot or fatty deposit blocks a blood vessel or artery or when a blood vessel breaks and bleeds into the brain. Blood flow into the brain is interrupted.

When a brain attack occurs, it kills brain cells in the immediate area because they no longer receive the oxygen and nutrients they need to function.

A victim suffering from mild stroke may experience only minor effects such as weakness in an arm or a leg. In contrast, a bigger stroke may leave the victim paralyzed on one side of the body.

Some people recover completely from less serious strokes, while others lose their lives to very severe strokes especially if the region affected controls the muscles that operate the pumping of the heart or breathing.

Ministroke

Many people ignore transient ischemic attacks (TIAs), commonly referred to as "ministrokes."

Because they are often short-lived, most victims attribute the condition to other things like the heat, something they ate, or a migraine.

TIAs are brief interruptions in the flow of blood to a portion of the brain. They usually last between two and 15 minutes, with symptoms disappearing within 24 hours.

TIAs can be warning signs of an imminent stroke, and getting swift medical attention is critical.

The symptoms, similar to those of a stroke but are short in duration, are blurring, dimming or loss of vision, change in speech, tingling around the mouth, numbness in an arm or leg and sudden severe headache. Several of these symptoms may be experienced simultaneously.

Heart attack

A heart attack, on the other hand, occurs when the blood supply to some parts of the heart muscle is severely reduced or stopped. This happens when one or more of the coronary arteries supplying blood to the heart muscle and blocked. This is usually caused by the buildup of plaque due to atherosclerosis. The plaque can eventually burst or tear when a blood clot forms and blocks the artery.

When too little blood reaches the heart, chest pain, or angina, may occur. The pain may vary in occurrence and be mild and intermittent or more pronounced and steady. It can be severe enough to make normal everyday activities difficult.

If the blood supply is cut off for more than a few minutes, muscle cells in the heart suffer permanent injury and die. The more time that passes without treatment to restore blood flow, the greater the damage to the heart. This can kill or disable someone, depending on how much heart muscle is damaged.

What you need to know about stroke

What is a stroke?

A stroke occurs when blood flow to the brain is interrupted. Brain cells in the immediate area begin to die because they no longer receive the oxygen and nutrients they need to function.

What are the types of stroke?

In an ischemic stroke, a blood clot blocks or plugs a blood vessel or artery in the brain. About 80 percent of strokes are ischemic.

In a hemorrhagic stroke, a blood vessel in the brain breaks and bleeds into the brain. About 20 percent of strokes are hermorrhagic.

Warning signs of stroke

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arm or leg (especially on one side of the body).
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding speech.
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes.
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause.
- Other danger signs include double vision, drowsiness and nausea or vomiting.

What should a bystander do?

A bystander should know the signs and act in time. If you believe someone is having a stroke, call an ambulance or doctor immediately. Stroke is a medical emergency. Immediate treatment may save someone's life and enhance his or her chances for successful rehabilitation and recovery.

Why is there a need to act fast?

Ischemic strokes can be treated with a drug that dissolves blood clots obstructing blood flow to the brain. The window of opportunity to start treating stroke patients is three hours. But to be evaluated and receive treatment, patients need to get to the hospital within 60 minutes.

What are risk factors for stroke?

Having a risk factor doesn't mean you'll have a stroke and not having a risk factor doesn't mean you won't get a stroke. But your risk of stroke grows as the number and severity of risk factors increase.

Some of the most important treatable conditions linked to stroke are:

High blood pressure. *Treat it.* This is the most potent risk factor for stroke. Eat a balanced diet, maintain a healthy weight and exercise to reduce blood pressure.

Cigarette smoking. *Quit.* Smoking has been linked to the buildup of fatty substances in the carotid artery. Nicotine raises blood pressure. Carbon monoxide reduces the amount of oxygen the blood can carry to the brain. Cigarette smoke makes the blood thicker and more likely to clot.

Heart disease. *Manage it.* Your doctor can treat your heart disease and may prescribe medication to help prevent the formation of clots. National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke scientists believe that those over 50 years should consider, with their doctor, aspirin therapy.

Diabetes. *Control it.* This disorder not only affects the body's ability to use sugar but also causes destructive changes in the blood vessels. Treatment can delay the onset of complications that increase the risk of stroke.

Transient ischemic attacks (TIAs). *Seek help.* They are "mini strokes" that last for only a few minutes or hours. They should never be ignored. They can be treated with drugs or surgery. If you had a stroke in the past, it's important to reduce your risk of a second stroke. A second stroke can be twice as bad.

National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

Educating Filipinos on stroke

By Tessa R. Salazar

MUCH like a band of terrorists blocking, staging a kidnapping and paralyzing all activities in an area in, say, Basilan, a stroke, forces affected body parts to cease functioning, resulting in partial paralysis and disability.

Stroke is the second leading cause of death and the leading cause of adult disability or handicaps worldwide. It is an urgent situation calling for immediate action.

Said neurologist Ester Bitanga, vice president of the Stroke Society of the Philippines: "Don't wait for the symptoms to disappear. Call an ambulance and bring the patient (to the hospital) preferably within the first three hours."

Stroke is preventable, but some sacrifices have to be made, such as quitting smoking, limiting alcohol and salt intake, avoiding fatty foods and opting instead for a low-fat, low cholesterol, high-fiber diet.

Vigilance is the key. People are urged to keep tabs on their blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol levels. Doing these have actually been successful in preventing strokes in significant numbers of people who are at risk.

The Stroke Society cited the following "well-established" risk factors that should be identified and modified. These are hypertension, transient ischemic attacks, heart diseases (atrial fibrillation, coronary artery disease, myocardial infarction, valvular heart disease), smoking, diabetes mellitus and asymptomatic carotid disease.

"The older you get, the higher the risk. But (age) is nonmodifiable," said Bitanga. "This cannot be changed so what we are addressing are the modifiable risk factors for stroke," she added.

The Stroke Society also identified "less well-established risk factors" but which are also considered important. These are hypercholesterolemia (high blood cholesterol), excessive alcohol use, physical inactivity and certain dietary factors.

Filipino physicians have been asked by the organization to actively identify, treat and monitor patients with risk factors for stroke.

Patients, on the other hand, are being asked by medical experts to take an active part in keeping themselves free from stroke—through regular exercise, maintenance of their ideal body weight and body mass index.

The Stroke Society said the disease is a "public health problem" and recommended the establishment of stroke centers in every region of the country.

Educating the community about stroke—its symptoms and risk factors, and following the recommended lifestyle modifications and medical treatment to reduce its risk—should be a priority, said the Stroke Society.

The case of the breast lump

MEDICAL FILES

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

FOR EMMY P., the future seems both bright and bleak and when she thinks about it, she can't help but have ambivalent feelings, with her emotions swinging back and forth like a pendulum. Both the best and the worst things in her life happened at almost the same time. At 34, she was finally pregnant with her first child, eight years after she married her childhood sweetheart. But right after their son Mark was born, she was diagnosed as having breast cancer. This made her birthing, motherhood and breast cancer experiences an odd twist of fate.

Emmy and her husband, Rex, waited for so long to have a child of their own. And when they finally heard the good news that the stork was coming, they practically spent all their spare time preparing everything that the baby needed. They shopped for baby clothes, feeding bottles and all sorts of toys to fill the baby's nursery. The day Mark came and filled their house with his high-pitched cries was the happiest day of their lives.

Tumor discovery

It was while preparing to breastfeed her baby that Emmy felt a lump in her left breast. If it hadn't been for her baby, Emmy wouldn't have discovered the tumor early enough. At first, she thought it was just some tissue buildup due to her breastfeeding. She thought it could affect the baby so she immediately consulted her gynecologist.

Her doctor took Emmy's medical history and performed a thorough breast examination, palpating nodes up to the armpit area. Although the doctor already had a diagnosis, she just told Emma that she could feel a lump but wasn't quite sure whether it was cancerous or not. A biopsy of the breast mass was done, and the same doctor who gave Emmy much joy when she told her she was pregnant, had to be the harbinger of the sad news that she had breast cancer.

Genetic predisposition

The first thing that came into Emmy's mind was Mark. She had just started cherishing the joys of motherhood. She and Rex were just starting to build a family. She was only 34, too young to be struggling with a life-threatening disease. She couldn't help but shudder at the fear that she might no longer be around to comfort Mark on his first day in school.

Emmy had the genetic predisposition to breast cancer. Her grandmother died of breast cancer at age 50 and her aunt had also been struggling with the disease since she was 40. Emmy hoped a cure would be found before she or her sisters reached an age when they would have to confront the possibility themselves. But she never imagined that she'd be the one to face this grim reality herself and at such a young age.

Breast cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in women (after lung cancer) and is the leading cause of cancer death among women aged 35 to 54.

In 2002 alone, 192,200 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer worldwide and approximately 40,600 will die. Although these numbers may sound frightening, research reveals that the mortality rate can decrease by 30 percent if all women aged 50 and older will have a mammogram to detect breast cancer early, especially in high-risk cases.

Cause still unknown

According to Dr. Rey Joson, one of the country's renowned cancer surgeons who founded the Cancer Crusaders' Club at the Manila Doctor's Hospital, the cause of breast cancer is still unknown, although genetic predisposition is considered a factor. Emmy appears

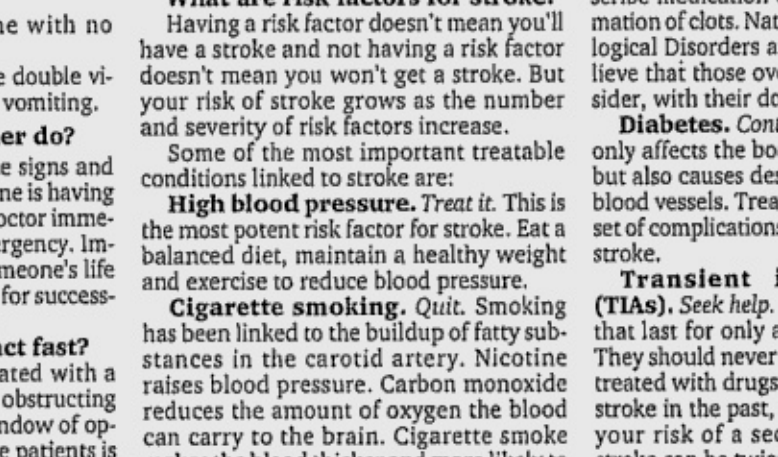


ILLUSTRATION:STEPH BRAVO

to have this predisposition because it runs in the family. However, the biggest risk factor for developing breast cancer is simply being a woman. Women have about a hundred times greater chance of developing breast cancer than men. Studies also show that the risk of breast cancer increases as a woman gets older.

Based on some reports, another factor that might have increased her risk of developing breast cancer was her late childbearing. Women who have their first child after the age of 30 have a greater chance of developing breast cancer than women who have a child at a younger age.

Emmy's breast cancer started in the walls of her milk ducts. Fortunately, since it was detected early *(carcinoma in situ)*, this type of cancer was confined to a specific area of the breast and could be totally removed by surgery.

It was as if a little bit of light have shone on Emmy's dark path. All the while, she thought it was the end of the world for her. She know too well the worst about breast cancer and she had feared everything about it. When her grandmother's breast cancer recurred, it was already too advanced to save her. From her breast, the cancer had already spread to her lungs and bones. Emmy saw how cancer literally consumed her grandmother's previously healthy body.

Treatment methods

But then, the technology of diagnosis and treatment for breast cancer was not as reliable and effective then as it is now. As with other cancers, breast cancer treatment also includes surgery, radiation and chemotherapy. Although these are the only hope for remission and possibly cure, patients like Emmy dread these treatment methods. Surgery may mean hope for cure but it may also mean losing one's breast. That is every woman's greatest fear. And Emmy is no exception.

However, the doctor assured Emmy she need not fear losing her breast. Since her tumor was found early enough, her cancer had not yet spread and therefore surgery will be performed only to remove the cancer, not the breast. This procedure is aptly termed breast-conserving surgery, which includes, lumpectomy or the removal of the tumor with only a small amount of the surrounding tissue.

Mastectomy, on the other hand, is the procedure where all the breast tissue is removed, sometimes including the chest muscles and other tissues as well. This is done when diagnosis is made too late and cancer has already spread or is already too big.

After lumpectomy, Emmy had to undergo radiation therapy to kill the cancer cells at the site from which the tumor was removed. The doctor also included chemotherapy in her treatment plan to make sure that rapidly multiplying cancer cells would be suppressed. The doctor also opted to give hormone- blocking therapy to help maintain remission.

After surgery, Emmy had to summon enough courage to face her other fears. There was the fear of losing her hair and experiencing all the side effects of chemotherapy. Her greatest fear though was that her breast cancer might come back. She was haunted by these fears day and night until she had consigned her life totally to God and left her fate in His hands. She now praises and thanks God for every single day she lives.

Emmy's case is a good example where breast cancer may be arrested or even cured if detected early enough. It is therefore necessary for every women, especially those 20 and above, to conduct a self-examination of the breast (SEB) regularly. This allows a woman to detect lumps at an early stage.

Simple steps

Cancer specialists like Dr. Joson recommend some simple steps to do it properly:

- Place your right arm behind your head. (When lying down, place a pillow under your right shoulder.)
- Use the finger pads of the three middle fingers on your left hand to feel for lumps in the right breast.
- Press firmly enough to feel the breast tissue under your skin. A firm ridge in the lower curve of each breast is normal.
- Move around your breast in a circular, up-and-down line, or wedge pattern. Be sure to do it the same way every time. Check the entire breast area, noting any changes from prior checks.
- Repeat the exam on your left breast, using the finger pads of the right hand. (Move the pillow under your left shoulder.)
- Repeat the examination of both breasts while standing, with your one arm behind your head. The upright position makes it easier to check the upper and outer part of the breasts (toward your armpit). This is where about half of breast cancers are found. You may want to do the standing part of the SEB while you are in the shower. Some breast changes can be felt more easily when your skin is wet and soapy.
- When finished, stand in front of a mirror and check your breasts for any dimpling of the skin, changes in the nipple, redness or swelling.

Women are also advised to undergo a mammography test, especially those aged 30 and above. Mammography is the best way to detect breast cancer early. Regular SEB and mammography offer the best chance of finding breast cancer early and increase one's chances of surviving once there is a positive diagnosis.

It has been two years since breast cancer and Mark came into Emmy's life. Because of early diagnosis, Emmy is now under remission from breast cancer. She now enjoys being a full-time mom to Mark and wife to her ever-supportive husband. She looks forward to the day when Mark will graduate from college and she and Rex will be around together to cherish that memorable event. With God's grace, she hopes to still be around to look after Mark's children.

(For feedback, e-mail: raffymd @i-manila.com.)

Don't sleep your life away

By Massie K. Santos
Contributor

PARENTS every where must be rejoicing: a study published in the February issue of the Archives of General Psychiatry shows scientific evidence that people who sleep eight or more hours a night are literally sleeping their lives away.

According to the paper by Dr. Daniel Kripke and his colleagues from the University of California at San Diego (UCSD), people who sleep eight hours a night are 12 percent more likely to die within six years compared to those who only sleep six-and-a-half to seven-and-a-half hours a night. People who sleep eight-and-a-half hours a night increase by 15 percent their risk of an early death. (Yes, that extra half hour of sleep really does make a difference after all.)

Forget Rip van Winkle's legendary 20-year nap, although according to the fairy tale he's still alive under some mountain fast asleep. If ever there was a study that called for seizing the day, this one was it.

Insomnia

Needless to say, upon first glance, anyone reading Kripke's paper will expect the number of insomniacs worldwide to increase dramatically over the next few months alone. It should be pointed out, however, that the study shows that people who got less than four hours of sleep a night were at the same level of risk as those who slept eight-and-a-half hours a night.

Over a million people in the United States between the ages of 30 and 102 participated in the six-year study. But critics have pointed out a few flaws in the way it was

ILLUSTRATION:STEPH BRAVO

conducted, putting into question the validity of its conclusions.

The study was commissioned in 1982 by the American Cancer Society (ACS) to determine cancer risks and causes. Those surveyed had to answer questions about their sleeping habits and whether or not they took sleeping pills. Those conducting the survey never tried to verify the responses and all answers were based on memory, hazy as they might have been at the time.

Also, participants weren't randomly selected but were relatives and friends of volunteers conducting the survey. These participants were tracked down in 1988 to check whether or not they were still alive. Only 2 percent of the participants could not be found.

Flawed

The built-in bias and the inaccuracies (or at least, the inability to verify the answers) of the data have led some critics to suggest that the study results did not reflect the behavior of society at large. Participants were never asked if they felt sleepy during the day, if they took naps, or if they even slept well during those hours of unconsciousness each night.

One sleep expert pointed out that since the ACS did the survey, a greater than average number of participants might have had serious medical problems, which would have affected their sleeping patterns. This, in turn, would have affected the conclusions of the UCSD team.

Researchers said about 5 percent of the women and 9 percent of the men surveyed in 1982 had died by the time of the follow-up, with causes of death mainly attributed to cancer or heart disease.

Dr. Kripke agrees that there are some problems with the data and that further studies are required to substantiate his group's conclusions.

Sleeping pills

One finding in the study suggests that using sleeping pills increased the risk of death, although the researcher was quick to point out that pills used 20 years ago were no longer used today. This should calm down sleeping pill manufacturers everywhere.

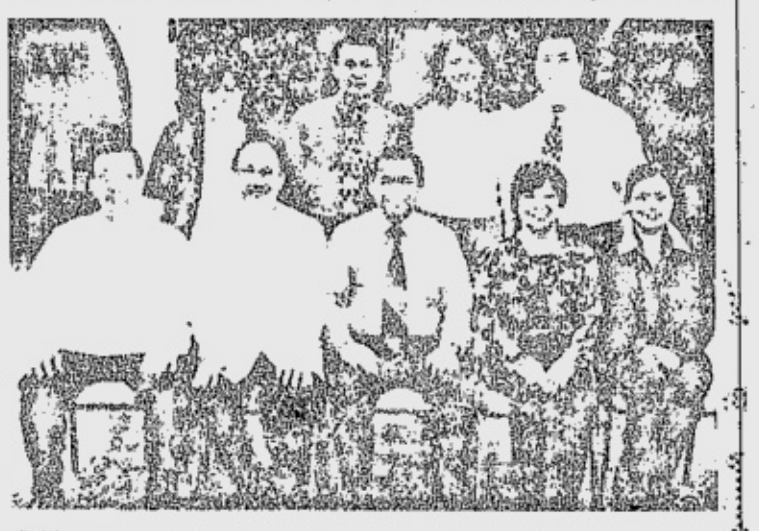
Dr. Kripke does note, however, that the conclusions derived from the study are significant in that they tell us that those who sleep less than eight hours a night are not necessarily sleep-deprived or in poorer health than those who sleep longer.

His statement was echoed by sleep experts Dr. Phyllis Zee, director of the sleep disorders center at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, and Dr. Rosalind Cartwright, a psychologist at the Rush-Presbyterian St. Luke's Medical Center in Chicago. Both women agree that some people are born with the ability to sleep for six hours or less yet stay alert and active throughout the day, while others are born with the inability to function given the same amount of sleep.

In short, quality, not quantity, is what matters.

Most people today want to live longer, but they may not be willing to lose sleep over the matter. The fountain of youth has not yet been found, and science may have come up with the next best thing. That topic, however, is best reserved for a future article, and hopefully no one will be too sleepy to read it.

(The author may be reached at massie@massie.com.)



CONFERENCE ORGANIZING COMMITEE
The country will host the 4th Asian Ostomy Association Conference and 7th House of Delegates Meeting on Oct. 23-26 at the Century Park Hotel. Some members of the organizing committee are, seated from left, Dr. Carlos Magsanoc, Dr. Alberto Roxas, Dr. Romeo Gutierrez, Nelda Escueta, Sylvia Palma. Standing from left are Tina Presbitero, Dr. Armand Crisostomo, Dr. May Punzalan, Dr. Mark Kho.

New drug for enlarged prostate introduced

A POTENT nonsurgical alternative for the treatment of enlarged prostate or Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH) was unveiled at a press conference held at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel recently.

A new once-daily formulation that uses the unique Geomatrix Technology delivery system, Xatral OD is a triple-layered extended release tablet with the active drug alfuzosine HCl contained within a matrix between two nonactive layers.

With the introduction of this gradual release medicine, the efficacy of pharmacological therapy is now maintained over a 24-hour period, making it more convenient for patients to achieve round-the-clock therapy with no need for any dose titration.

BPH is the most common neoplastic growth affecting aging men. It is the most common benign tumor in men and its incidence is age-related. Men suffering from BPH have a major impact on their lives. Three-fourths of men with BPH report at least one symptom to be bothersome in their daily lives.

The incidence of histological BPH is considered to be as high as 50 percent in men aged 60 rising to 88 percent in those aged 80 years.

The reference treatment for the disease is a surgical procedure, called Trans-Urethral Resection of the Prostate (TURP). Not all those suffering from BPH are candidates for surgery. But even those who are waiting for surgery could benefit from a treatment that would improve their condition.

Genetically modified crops: safety and health concerns

(Second of three parts)

LAST week we started discussing the official position of the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) regarding biotechnology. NAST stands squarely behind biotechnology. With its permission, I have liberally taken excerpts from its paper "GM Crops: Biosafety and Food Safety Issues and Concerns." Let us focus on some common concerns.

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

First, on the issue of antibiotic resistance:

Most of first-generation GM crops have antibiotic resistance (like kanamycin) genes that allegedly can lead to the inactivation of oral doses of the antibiotic or can transfer to pathogenic microorganisms in the gut or the soil that will, in turn, render them resistant to such antibiotics. (Doesn't this remind us of our doctors' admonition to refrain from taking antibiotics indiscriminately, for fear of eventual bacterial resistance to these?)

In the case of GM crops, experts have concluded that "the chance of antibiotic resistance genes getting into intestinal bacteria is miniscule" (Science, Nov. 26, 1999). They also said "no one has been able to show that native bacteria will take up antibiotic resistance genes when exposed to transgenic plant material under natural conditions" (Nature Biotechnology, Sept. 17, 1999).

Many scientists are saying that even if antibiotic resistance genes do get in, it will not matter since the same resistance genes are already widely present in many microorganisms. Besides, kanamycin is not used anymore in clinics because it is a toxic antibiotic.

Superweeds

Second, on questions about the creation of so-called superweeds:

Escape of a foreign gene by pollen or seed dispersal may create superweeds. During field trials, the possibility of crossing with wild relatives and the distance by which pollen can be blown away are determined. For example, among the commercially released transgenic crops, rapeseed (or canola) has been shown to cross with weedy relatives, thus additional tests are required by the US Department of Agriculture for such crops.

However, according to many scientists, even if outcrossing occurs, the resulting weed is not expected to persist in the field due to lack of selection pressure. NAST though wants to be sure and believes that the possibility of crossing with weedy relatives should be determined on a case-to-case basis.

Third, on the possibility of faster adaptation by pests:

The resistance of crops (GM or conventional ones) against pest or disease breaks down in time. Insect populations eventually adapt to insecticides, especially when these are not managed properly. Thus, the concept of integrated pest management (IPM) has been developed.

Insect-protection of GM crops is just another mode of pest management, and indeed is compatible with IPM strategies. With carefully studied recommendations and good implementation, faster adaptation by pests should not be a major concern. NAST recommends the issuance of such guidelines for strict implementation.

Monarch butterflies

Fourth, effects on nontarget organisms:

This issue came to a head in 1999 when a short paper published in Nature reported a laboratory experiment showing the lethal effects on monarch butterflies fed with milkweed dusted with Bt pollen. Even if the authors themselves noted that this was merely a preliminary study, the paper attracted huge media coverage, with support and rebuttals from friends and foes of biotechnology.

Soon it was noted that an earlier paper was overlooked—and that the mortality rates might have been exaggerated and that worst-case scenarios would not occur.

As for alleged persistence of toxins in the soil, this is generally believed to be unfounded.

Strict evaluation

Fifth, questions on food safety:

All GM crops and foods that have been released so far in various countries have undergone rigorous analysis and evaluation for food safety. The stricter countries, like those in the European Union, have approved various GM crops such as soybean, corn, cotton, potato and oilseed. In 1999, Japan had approved different GM crops for food or feed use.

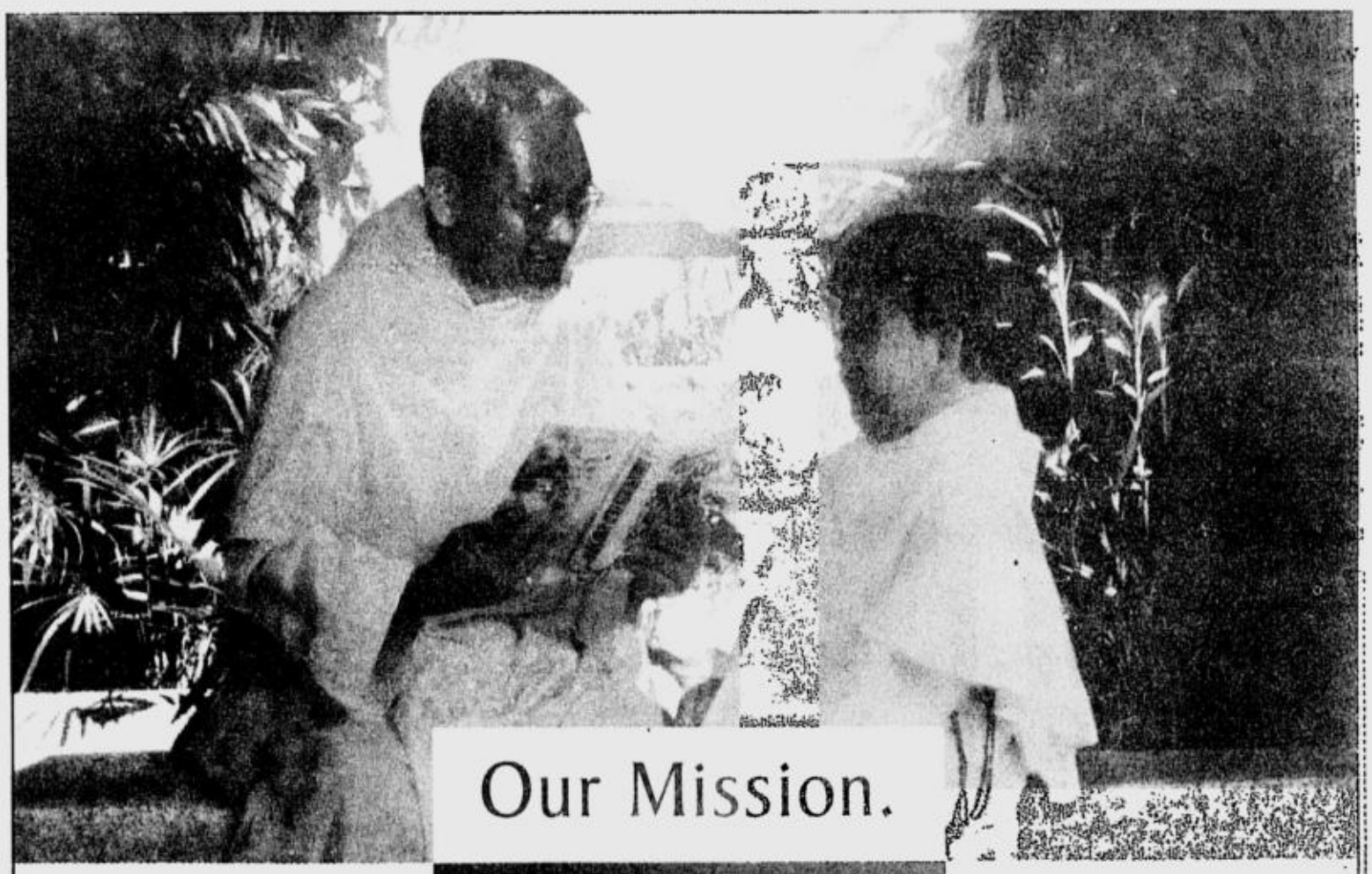
What about the presence of allergenic or toxic substances?

We discussed earlier the safety of antibiotic resistance genes. As for allergenic substances, strict guidelines have already been implemented by international experts. Yes, there may be risks, but these should be weighed against the potential benefits.

Many conventionally bred crops do contain toxins and allergens, but their risks have been managed. Food crops like cassava, almonds, beans, soybeans and peanuts have natural toxins and antinutritional factors, but through processing these have been made edible to humans and animals.

This brings us to the question of labeling, a strong demand by many consumer groups.

According to labeling policies in the United States, Canada and the European Union, a label is required only if a health or safety concern has been identified. However, our country does not yet have an official policy on labeling of GM foods, and I confess that I am highly in favor of such implementation.



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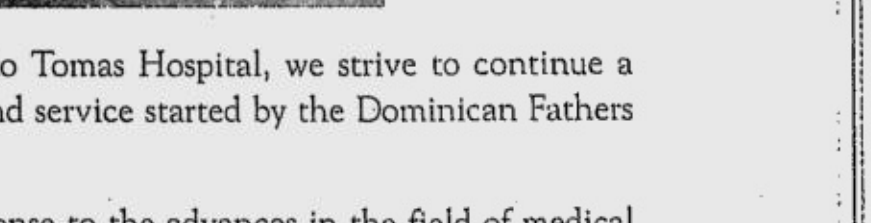

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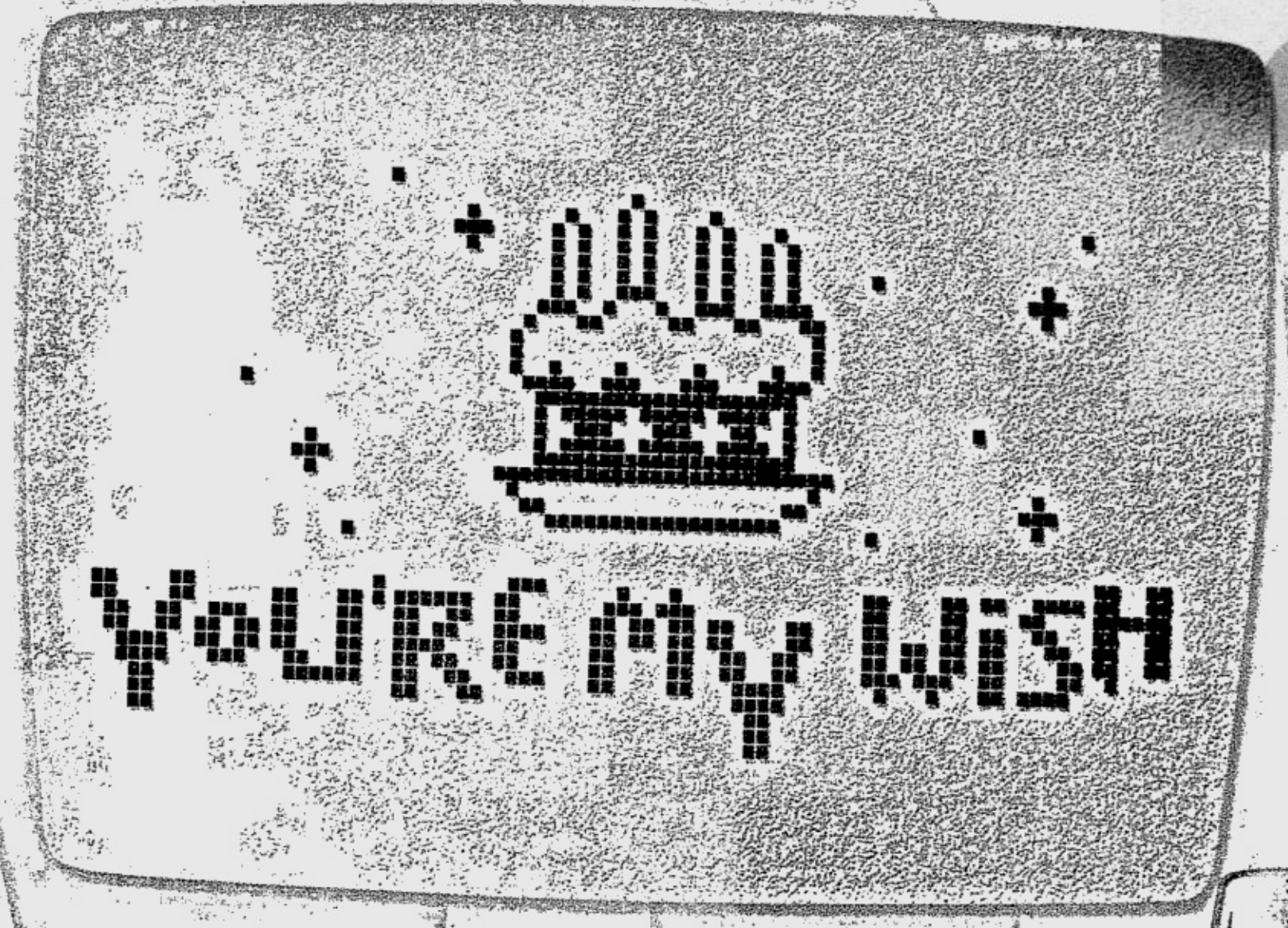

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SATURDAY Special

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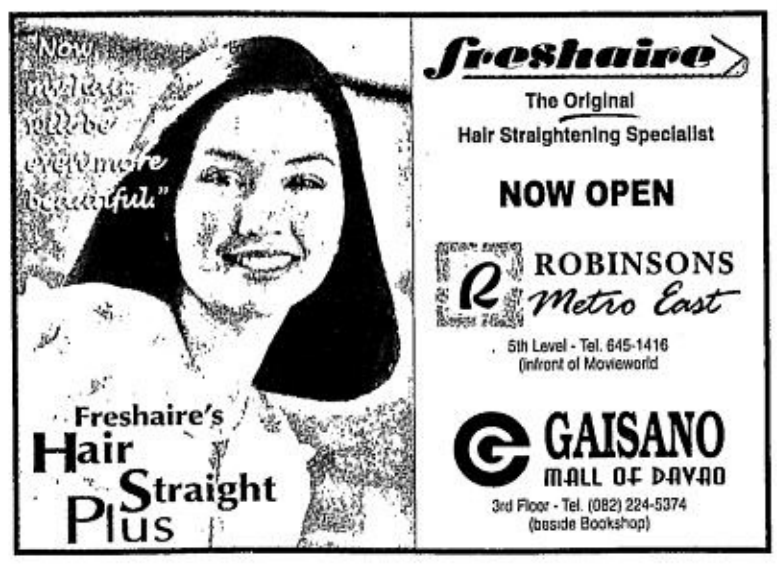
CAST OF "FRIENDS." No.1 again.



TV's 'Friends' braces for season finale

By Doug Young

LOS ANGELES—NBC's hip but aging group of "Friends" could be in for a long labor day in the show's season finale set for May.

Show creators Kevin Bright, Marta Kauffman and David Crane denied that a pregnant Rachel, played by actress Jennifer Aniston, will die in childbirth on the season finale, despite a recent tabloid report. But she could be in for the longest labor period ever at the hospital where she gives birth, they said.

Childbirth

"This year we know Rachel is going to have a baby," Bright said in a teleconference with reporters. "And she's not dying in childbirth," chimed in Kauffman.

The season finale has yet to be written, but the three creators said they do have some ideas for the birth which will occur on the season's last episode.

"At the moment, we've been talking about the idea that it might be the longest labor in the history of the hospital," Bright said. "Other than that, we're still weighing some options."

What will now be the season finale was nearly the show's series finale, as the contracts for its six principal actors were set to expire and reports circulated that some were ready to hang up their latte mugs. But after some top-secret negotiations, the group agreed to come back for a ninth season for a reported salary of $1 million each per episode.

In the current season, Joey, played by Matt LeBlanc, harbors a crush on Rachel, who will soon deliver a child fathered by former boyfriend Ross, played by David Schwimmer.

Soap opera

If a program billed as a sitcom is starting to sound more like a soap opera, that certainly wasn't the creators' intent, according to Bright, Kauffman and Crane.

"I don't think suds is what we're going for," Kauffman said. "Once we got into the Joey-Rachel storyline, we just wanted to play it out to the end of it."

And what about the ninth and final season? The show's creators said it's still way too early to speculate on what might happen when the show really does take its final bow.

Kauffman said. "My guess is that the series finale will be an hour . . . We don't have specific plans at the moment. We're still trying to figure out the end of this season."

Since succumbing to the "Survivor" phenomenon last spring, "Friends" has rebounded strongly in the current season to become the No. 1 rated series on television.

Analysts have attributed the resurgence to a strong storyline involving Rachel's pregnancy, but also to the country's craving for familiar shows in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks. ***Reuters***

Billy Joel songs in new musical

NEW YORK—The Piano Man is taking his act to Broadway.

Billy Joel's songs are the basis for a new musical, "Movin' Out," that will hit the New York stage in October. While the pop music icon won't star in—or even be part of—the show, 26 of his songs and instrumental compositions will.

Six friends

The play, conceived and directed by Emmy-award winning choreographer Twyla Tharp, traces the lives of six friends over two decades. Joel's songs and lyrics provide all the words.

In concept, it's not unlike "Mamma Mia!"—a loosely structured play that strings together a number of tunes from the 1970s disco group ABBA. That show opened last year on Broadway, and has proven to be a hit.

Live band

Joel wasn't available for comment, but said last year of Tharp's project, "It works really, really well, and the narrative is being described through the lyrics of the songs, which are done by a live band, with dance, so it's a different kind of performance."

The show is slated to open Oct. 24 at the Richard Rodgers Theatre after a six-week engagement at Chicago's Shubert Theatre. ***AP***

Battle of the fans

ALTHOUGH it is to a much lesser degree, the three-cornered conflict raging among the camps of Judy Ann Santos. Kristine Hermosa and Claudine Barretto brings back nostalgic thoughts of the fiercer but just as impassioned Noranians-versus-Vilmanians battle royale of the '70s.

Different

I say fiercer because I don't see any of the hair-pulling contests that made the fan wars before immensely more interesting. Not that I'd want to see them again today!

Before, outright fisticuffs were par for the course for the warring fans who thought nothing of investing everything they had for and in defense of their beloved idols.

But the passions of fans today are as intense as ever. It's quite amusing, actually, because my "Careful, Careful" program on dzMM (2:30-4:00 p.m., Monday to Friday) has become the arena of their daily skirmishes and, more often than not, I get caught in the crossfire.

Like, I get accused of being partial to Judy Ann's camp and, worse, of being her paid hack! What can I say? I mean, if Judy Ann paid to be on her side, it would have impoverished her by now!

More accessible

Well, perhaps, I do get to announce more news about Juday—but, really, that's more by sheer force of circumstance than by choice on my part. Fact is, my staff tries to get as much news as they can, not just about the three drama princesses of ABS-CBN but also about every important star in the entertainment world. But it just so happens that Judy Ann is more accessible to us than the others.

She personally returns our calls and makes herself available for live telephone interviews to update us on the latest happenings in her career and personal life. If only the others were just as accommodating!

Oh, look what this has made me—defensive over nothing. And this is not even the point I'd like to make. Ha-ha!

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

First, as I said, times now are different. Before, the battle lines were clearly drawn—unlike today, when Judy Ann, Kristine and Claudine belong basically to the same studio. However the battle of the soaps turns out, ABS-CBN wins. Whether you're for "Pangako Sa 'Yo," or for "Sa Puso Ko'y Iingatan Ka" or for "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan," Channel 2 has captured you in its grip.

Orchestrated madness

In other words, there's a sense of orchestrated madness in all this—the rivalry for superstardom is, to quite a large extent, contrived. And, really, there's not much sense in fighting when, in the final analysis, you all belong to one big camp!

In the past, the battle wasn't just between stars but also between studios—and there was a sense of genuine rivalry. But this has effectively been made moot and academic by the long-standing supremacy of ABS-CBN/Star Cinema.

Let's admit it, the fight being put up by others like GMA and Viva Films is quite puny. The Lopez Group has all the stars and superior logistical resources in terms of talent, equipment and production values—despite its cost-cutting measures due to the hard times. (News and Public Affairs at Channel 7 is better, but that's another story.)

Second point I'd like to make: there should more maturity now among the fans. I remember, the fans of Nora Aunor were ordinary folks who pinned their hopes on the brown Cinderella from Iriga. And when they let go of their fierce and fiery passions, my heart went out to them.

NORA AND VILMA. Genuine rivalry.

But when a bank executive from Makati calls me up and spills her spleen on Judy Ann in defense of her idol Kristine, I secretly wonder: Why does she even bother?

Good performance

I'd like to believe that the days when fans could hold hostage even the personal lives of their idols are long gone. That stars owe nothing to their fans except a good performance. I'd like to believe the fans today are mature enough to realize that the best way to support their idols is by watching their movies and TV shows, and not by how loud they can scream or how fiercely they can fight physically for them.

I mean, if the fans need to have a cause to fight for, they should find a really good one—like how to build this nation or how to restore the dignity of the poorest of the poor among us!

I remember, militant students staged a vigil-rally in front of the US Embassy to protest human rights violations in the US bases, while Noranians and Vilmanians threw soft drink bottles at each other during an awards night where Nora won as Most Popular Star or something.

Today, there are multi-sectoral mass actions against the Balikatan exercises, while the fans of Judy Ann, Kristine and Claudine passionately argue the "fairytale" issue of who's the fairest of them all.

Indeed, the more things change, the more they remain the same. Quite sad, don't you think?

Their claims to fame

By Behn Cervantes

JUST about every performer has some claim to fame, an experience with a popular celebrity or future star. As a rule, we gleefully let our good friends know about them—not because we are bragging but because we want to add color to our lives, and spice to our careers.

Pataasan ng ihi, some say, or *pagbubuhat ng sariling bangko*. Usually, this is done in jest and merely as a way to pass the time.

Improbable experience

Often, such occasions take place when someone in the group mentions an improbable experience with some celebrity or some unknown (then) who later becomes a star. Since they are celebrities themselves, their boast is a mix of nostalgia and great affection.

For example, everyone knows Fides Cuyugan Asensio, the coloratura who is a musical icon in the country. She is also a fine teacher who has nurtured the voices of such operatic stalwarts as Margarita Gomez. To name her other students would fill up a book.

Madwomen

However, when a group backstage at "Portrait of An Artist As a Filipino" was comparing "claims to fame," Fides pointed out, "In my long career in music and theater, I have played many heroines who went mad!

"I played Lucia in "Lucia di Lammermoor" by Donizetti; Sisa in "Noli Me Tangere," the grand opera by De Leon, and Sisa again in the Asensio-Kasilag music drama; Julia in "Walang Sugat," another madwoman in "Larawan ng Kababaihan, Maskara at Mukha," Doña Luisa Bustamante in "La Loba Negra" *and* Juana la Loca in "Lapu-lapu," the Dmitiri production in 1997. I keep getting cast as a *buang*—I wonder why?"

As an aside, she mentions that, when she played the young Julia in the *zarzuela* "Walang Sugat," alternating as her mother Doña Julia were Irma Potenciano, a contemporary, and Baby Barredo, who is a decade younger than her.

Aside from playing "classically insane women," she has also sunk her theatrical teeth in the character of Mary Magdalene in a Holy Week presentation of Dramatic Philippines.

Lollie Mara is an attractive woman whose face is hard to forget, so when she is in a crowd, there are those who remember her distinct features and ask, *"Di ba, ikaw yung nanay ni* Richard (Gomez) . . . *sa ano nga ba yung pelikula?"*

ASENSIO. Fine voice teacher.

"*Oo*," Lollie is bound to tease, "*Nanay ako ni* Richard *sa pelikula. Anak ko rin si* Richard *sa* sitcom *na* 'Just D Three of Us.'"

Mothers

Truth to tell, Lollie has also played the mother of Christopher de Leon in "Biktima," and the mother of Eric Quizon in "Unang Tibok ng Puso." Rita Avila was cast as her daughter.

She was likewise the mother of Pinky Amador in the series "Angkan" as well as the screen mother of Kring Kring *aka* Cristina Gonzales, now Romualdez; Carol Dauden; Dawn Zulueta now Lagdameo, *and* Hilda Koronel!

The common denominator is that her screen "children" are all beautiful *mestizas* who usually portray wealthy characters. Lollie's obvious *mestiza* features, Zamboanga accent, class and poise are plus points for her claim to fame as the mother of the most beautiful actors in local filmdom.

She also says that she has "lived" in some of the most beautiful homes around, having portrayed the mistress of the Antipolo mansion of Liberty Ilagan, as well as the Ayala estate in Davao for the TV series with the same title. In that Chito Roño special, Rostum Padilla portrayed her son.

Lollie's other claim to fame is that she served a number of Philippine presidents at Radio-TV Malacañang (RTVM). ***(To be concluded)***

How to help makers of short films go mainstream

By Nestor U. Torre

THE COUNTRY'S short-film scene is in full, creative ferment, with scores of new filmmakers coming up with small but interesting productions on film or video.

These short productions show that's there's a wealth of new talents out there—talents who, if properly developed and showcased, can energize the local TV-film scene in a major way.

Few viewers

Trouble is, many of them have had their prospects limited by the short format they have chosen to work in, or has been imposed on them by lack of budget, etc. As a result, only a few viewers have had the chance to see their work, and the larger TV-film audience is the poorer for it.

In other countries, short films are viewed by more people due to a variety of factors or venues. If we can offer our own makers of short films at least some of those additional venues, we could help them get a bigger audience, and consequently, more support, financial and otherwise, for their future efforts.

Let's hope that our film leaders can explore these suggested options:

Experts

First, hold separate annual contests for film and video productions 30 minutes or shorter. Have these competitions judged by experts who can tell real talent apart from the usual pretentious sort.

Each year, choose the best short productions, and finance their entry in foreign short-film festivals, instead of leaving the (usually cash-strapped) filmmakers to fend for themselves.

On the local scene, arrange for the winning short film and video productions to be shown to a wider audience. First, on TV, convince the networks to show the productions on existing programs, or as specials.

Showing in mainstream moviehouses is more difficult to effect, but not impossible. Decades ago, short films were shown during intermission in our moviehouses, and that can happen again.

Film leaders

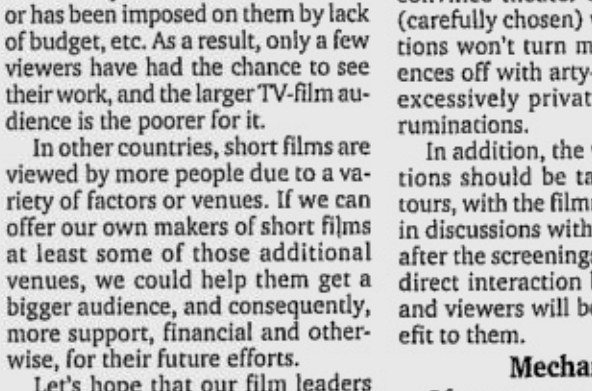
First, the move needs the support of our film leaders, who will then convince theater owners that the (carefully chosen) winning productions won't turn mainstream audiences off with arty-farty touches or excessively private or ponderous ruminations.

In addition, the winning productions should be taken on campus tours, with the filmmakers engaging in discussions with student viewers after the screenings. Hopefully, this direct interaction between makers and viewers will be of mutual benefit to them.

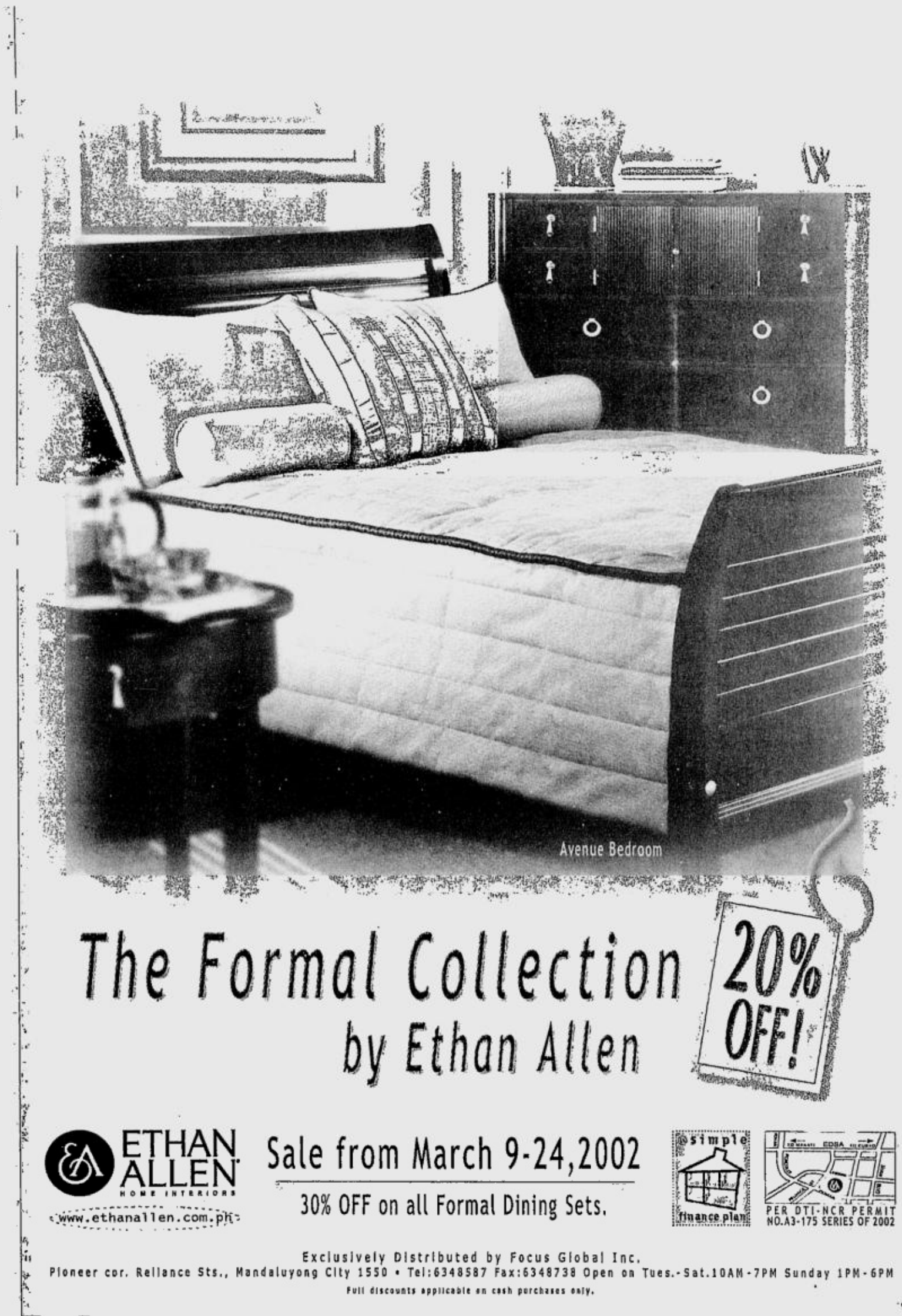
Mechanism

Of course, some makers of short films don't want to go mainstream. But, for those who do, it's important to set up a support and screening mechanism that will make it easier for them to show the mass audience what they have to offer.

Let's hope that these initial suggestions can interest some of the powers-that-be out there. We keep complaining about how tired and cynical our movies have become, and yet we make it so tough for the "fresh blood" to provide the transfusion we crave, and so desperately need.



MES de Guzman's short film, "Batang Trapo," has won plaudits but hasn't been seen by many viewers.



Fans cite their favorite foreign telenovelas

By Noelani Torre

EVER since "Thalia" as the scantily-clad "Marimar" sashayed into our television screens—and, admit it, some people's hearts—more than five years ago, the Mexican/Latin American telenovela has become a part of Philippine television. As a matter of fact, this import has become an institution and is here to stay.

Fast-paced

Fast-paced and starring people with the mestizo good looks that most of the population consider to be the ideal, the Latino telenovela is also chock-full of melodrama, romance, and adventure -a formula that has yet to fail with Filipino audiences.

"Marimar" was replaced by "Maria del Barrio" and "Maria Mercedes," then by "Rosalinda," and now we have "Monica Brava," "Alicia," and "Betty la Fea." A telenovela is not a telenovela without a heroine, but the last two, Alicia and Betty, are cut from a different cloth. Unlike the gorgeous Marias, they are neither *guwapa* nor endowed with hourglass figures. Alicia and Betty are homely and less *martir*, and they are the newest trend in the Latino telenovela.

When we asked viewers what their favorite foreign telenovela was, only one opted for "Monica Brava," while the rest chose "Alicia" and "Betty la Fea" (though the latter got fewer votes). This indicates that fans may have gotten a wee bit tired of pluperfect beauty and glamour. Here are some of the responses we got:

Good traits

"'Betty la Fea' is my favorite because it shows that external beauty is not the only thing that counts. Betty has all the good traits you'd want except for a beautiful face, and this is what makes the show different from the other telenovelas, where the *bida* is always pretty. This gives the story a different twist—*at buti na lang, kasi sawang-sawa na ako sa mga magagandang bida na lagi na lang inaapi*—typical for telenovelas but not exactly realistic."***—Patricia Baylon, 45.***

Beauty isn't everything

"'Alicia' was recommended to me by my sister because she said it was *'kakaiba'*- and it is! The heroine is ugly, for one, and the story is not the usual rags-to-riches sort of thing. It's not that mushy and I like it because it shows that beauty isn't everything.

"The heroine is smart and has a take-charge attitude and that's more important. It's like what they said in 'Shallow Hal,' something about beautiful women not being nice. Alicia isn't beautiful and is more than just nice—she's fun."***—Tina Layug, 23.***

"BETTY LA FEA." External beauty is not the only thing that counts.

More realistic

"'Alicia,' *kasi nakaka*-relate *ako sa* character *niya*, unassuming *at hindi mayabang. Hindi din* usual *na pangit ang* lead character *sa isang telenovela, kaya nagdadagdag ito ng maraming* twists *sa* plot. *Gusto ko na mabait siya pero marunong ding magalit at gumanti. Hindi* naïve *ang* character *niya, kaya mas* realistic *ang dating."***—Heaven de la Cruz, 16.**

Nice change

"'Alicia' has a funny format and it's comic, which is a nice change from all those heavy, serious melodramas where somebody starts screaming or crying every five minutes or so. Alicia herself is funny and she always has a punchline ready.

"I prefer to loosen up when watching TV and 'Alicia' is relaxing as well as entertaining. The fact that she's not good-looking only makes the show more lighthearted."***—Lewis Hidalgo, 18.***

More interesting

"'Alicia' is my favorite because it's usually funny and because an ugly *bida* is more interesting than the typical beautiful ones. *Nakakaaliw ang mga eksena,gaya nung na*-kidnap *yung* groom *ni* Alicia *ng karibal niya (o, di ba* divine?).

"Di pa ako nagsasawa sa kanya kasi di naman ako gano'n *ka-regular manood, 'tsaka hindi kasi siya* cliché. *Minsan* unpredictable, *pa kaya mas* enjoy *panoorin at sundan."***—Yeye Navarro, 19.**

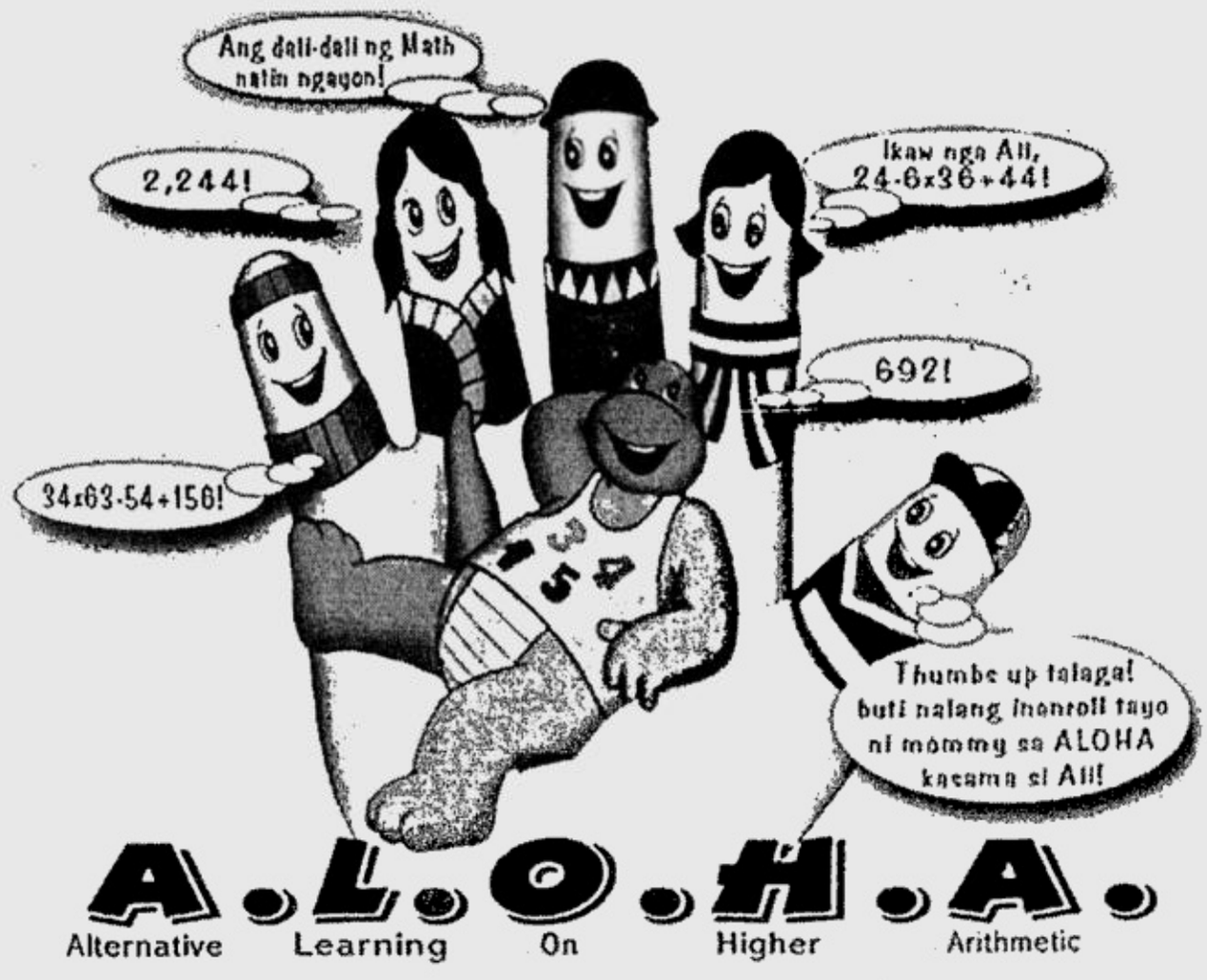
Tomboy

"I prefer watching 'Monica Brava' because the lead character is a different. She's a tomboy who keeps getting into scrapes and she's really funny most of the time. The show's timeslot is also more convenient because I have more free time in the evenings.

"'Monica' is very light and rarely serious, which is what I need after a long day. ('Alicia' is also funny but I think she gets pushed around most of the time and I don't like that.)

"I also like it that Monica doesn't flaunt her face and body even though she's beautiful."***—Maria Riza Colina, 19.***

Unlike the gorgeous Marias, Alicia and Betty are neither 'guwapa' nor endowed with hour-glass figures



God's love is everything

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

AS human beings, there is a need for us to care for others, and we direct this tendency to various living beings such as a child, spouse, friend, plants or pets. Sometimes, we extend our caring tendency towards inanimate objects such as a business, car, house or toys.

Unnatural

Indeed, to be uncaring for others, things or our own self is unnatural. It is like water being dry or fire being cold.

Due to this natural tendency to be concerned, people have gone out of their way to perform charitable acts. They build homes, give food or medical assistance to those in need. Some devote their whole life to humanitarian works.

Although these are generous acts, the problem is that everything ends in the material realm. Even good deeds and good results are temporary. We care for people and they eventually leave us. We care for things and they deteriorate and perish. We care for children and they may rebel against us. We support people, they stab us in the back.

Projects

My father used to run a national park and he established projects that he envisioned would provide livelihood opportunities for the disabled. He also beautified the place by cultivating all sorts of plants and trees. But, when other people took over, they uprooted some plants and closed down the livelihood project for the disabled. Such results can lead to frustration and anxiety.

Whatever we build in this world will be lost in due course. Every hospital, every home, every monument will crumble and be destroyed. Every relationship will be terminated by death.

A person who is attached to the results of his activities in this world will feel pain in losing that which he has given his life to.

Where is true satisfaction and fulfillment? Which goal is worth working, fighting, living and even dying for?

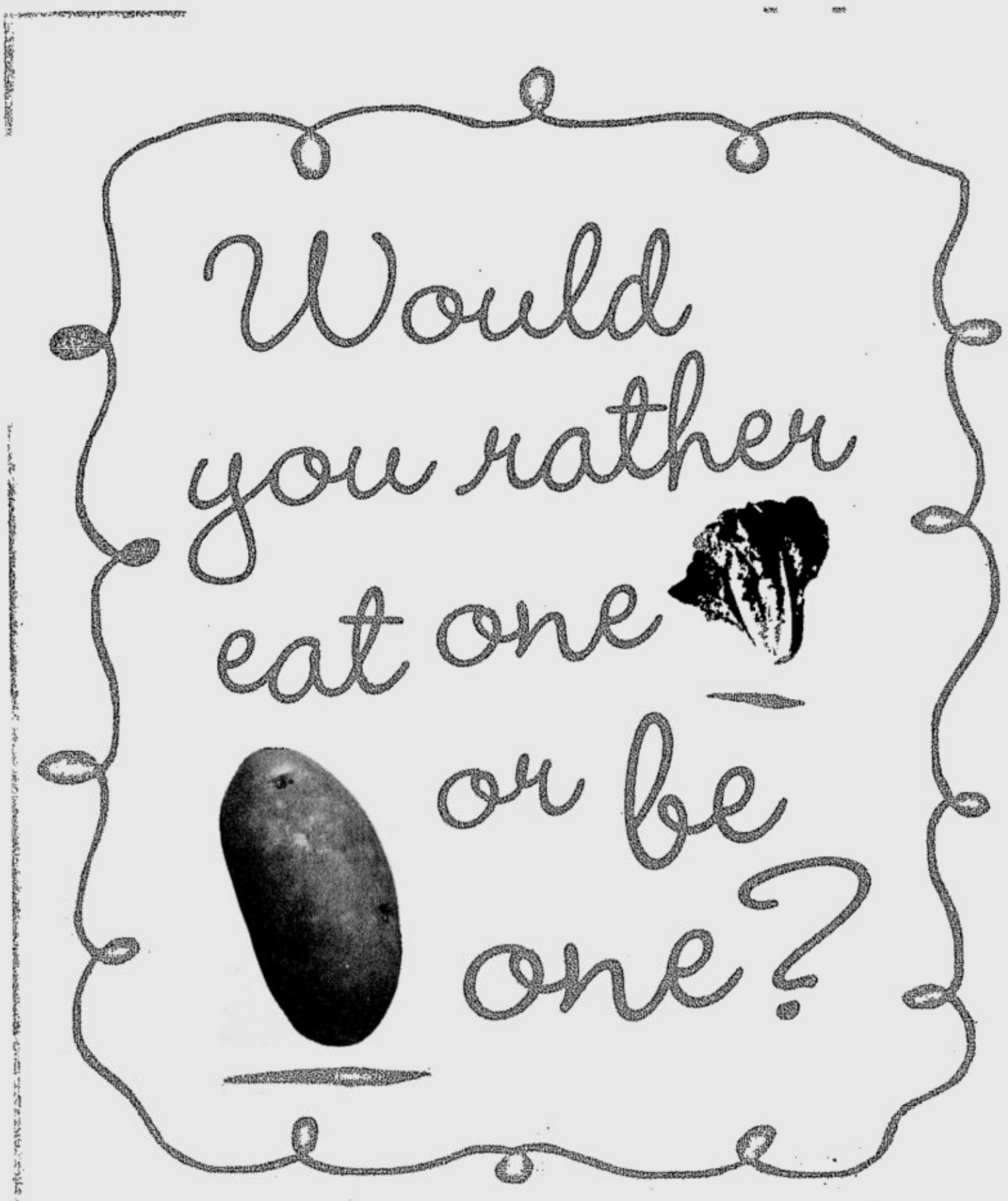
Eternal

We must realize that we are eternal in essence—spirit souls, part and parcel of the Supreme Soul. Being eternal, we need an eternal relationship and eternal shelter. We need to have someone we can relate to eternally and wholeheartedly.

We need to attach ourselves to that which will never crumble and never fade away. We need the Supreme beloved who is the perfect shelter, the perfect Beloved and Friend we can care for without limitation or without end.

And by taking shelter in the Supreme protector, we will be provided with all that we need, both spiritually and materially. To be linked up with the source of all happiness and opulence is to have everything that we need and crave. To have all the riches of the world is to possess nothing.

By loving God, we will also taste enlightened concern for His children. When we have tasted love for God, we can serve others without needing them. When we are filled with love for the Supreme, we can give to others without ever becoming empty again. To love and serve the Lord is to go back to our real home—the kingdom of the Supreme.



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Soulful Alicia Keys wins five Grammy awards

ALICIA Keys will headline this year's Esssence Music Festival in the Louisiana Superdome.

By Dean Goodman

LOS ANGELES—Soulful newcomer Alicia Keys, who burst onto the music scene last year with a hit album after being dumped by her old record company, was crowned the new queen of the music industry on Wednesday, after winning five Grammy Awards.

But the 21-year-old New York native had to share the spotlight with Irish rockers U2 and the hit country-themed soundtrack to "O Brother, Where Art Thou?"

Six categories

Keys' haul included the coveted best new artist and song of the year races. She had been nominated in six categories, and was prevented from a clean sweep when U2 won the final prize of the night, record of the year for its tune "Walk On."

The veteran rock quartet, which led the field with eight nominations, ended up with four Grammys, after winning three awards last year. R&B rookie India.Arie, who trailed U2 with seven nominations, went home empty-handed. She had competed against Keys in most categories.

Surprise

"O Brother" was the biggest surprise of the night, yielding four Grammy Awards in total. Its musical mastermind, T-Bone Burnett also nabbed four Grammys, including producer of the year.

Although "O Brother" has sold a staggering four million copies in the United States," it was considered a long-shot in a field comprising former category winners U2 and Bob Dylan, and also including rap duo Outkast and rookie R&B singer India.Arie.

The album, which consists of blues, gospel, country and bluegrass tunes performed by various artists, becomes the first soundtrack to win this category since "The Bodyguard" in 1994, and the first country album since Glen Campbell's "By the Time I Get To Phoenix" in 1969. It also won the movie soundtrack Grammy.

The album of the year prize also goes to the artists, who included 75-year-old banjo picker Ralph Stanley, bluegrass musician Alison Krauss and country veteran Emmylou Harris and folk singer Gillian Welch. With its diverse roster, Burnett was wary of categorizing the album.

"This is contemporary music. I don't think of it as roots music. I think of it as southern music. To me this is every bit as rocking and is way more in tune and free than anything anybody's doing," he told reporters.

Debut album

Keys, whose debut album was one of the best selling releases of last year, was considered a clear favorite. Her debut album, "Songs In A Minor," one of the best selling releases of last year, was named best R&B album. Its first single, the piano ballad, "Fallin'," was honored for female R&B vocal and R&B song.

"You don't know how much this humbles me," Keys said as she accepted her fifth award for song of the year, "Fallin."

U2 singer Bono told reporters that the band's two-year Grammy haul was all for the same album, "All That You Can't Leave Behind." He said the 10 million-selling album, which was released in 2000, was created in "desperate

SOULFUL/P.C6

TWO FOR THE SHOW

Singer Ogie Alcasid enjoys life as a married man

By Mary Ann A. Bautista and Ricky T. Gallardo

OGIE Alcasid aptly titles his new album "A Better Man." Ogie says it describes his current state as man and artist. "After getting married to a wonderful woman and becoming a father, my priorities now center on fulfilling these roles."

Happiness and bliss radiate from Ogie as he talks about his family. Since he's so happy, does that mean that he'll stop writing "painful" love songs? Ogie vigorously shakes his head: "As a songwriter, I try to condition my mind to be in the position of the person who goes through different emotions. I try to create a movie in my mind, a movie that has a beautiful yet painful love story to it."

He has sung duets with divas Regine Velasquez and Lani Misalucha, and Ogie feels that the interaction has made him a better singer and composer. "Working with other artists inspires me to write more songs. As a songwriter I think interacting with other artists has also made me more patient, to see the virtue in waiting for the inspiration to flow."

Is he a better composer? "When I was still starting I would get frustrated if nothing would come out in a session. Now I just wait for the inspiration, and then take advantage of it to the fullest."

He seems to put his heart and soul into every song. Does that mean his songs are an extension of him? "Not all my songs mirror who I am as a person. Only the ones that talk about love and devotion. Everybody knows that I am happily married, so songs about longing and separation are songs that I have created in my mind."

Pops counts her blessings

Pops is finding out first-hand that being single again is as tough as marriage. On top of raising Robin and Ram, she has to contend with intrigues. A casual conversation can be magnified into an "affair." A simple friendship can be construed as "steady dating."

But she feels her busy work schedule keeps her sane. "I could be talking to a guy friend, then I'll get linked to him. So what if I date? I am a single woman."

"I stuck to singing and acting because that's what I do best. I decided to stay in the business for myself and for my kids. I could have left and learned a new skill but singing and acting was what I do best, so I stayed," Pops grins.

She changes her look every so often to keep her fans interested. "As an artist I have to constantly reinvent myself for the benefit of my audience. They see me all the time, so they could easily get sick and tired of me," Pops explains.

Last year was memorable for her because of her renewed friendship with her ex-husband, Martin Nievera and the rumor that she has found new love with a French guy, Jacques Dupasquier. "With Martin I think being friends is the ultimate thing we could do for each other. First of all, it's not as if things were falling down for us both.

"*May kanya-kanya na kaming buhay* and we respect that. That moral support is very important because we have kids and I cannot ignore the fact that Martin is the father of Robin and Ram. I am lucky to have kids who understand our situation."

Star Awards

Who will take home the Star tonight?

After yesterday's award ceremonies for the Young Critics. Circle, it's the turn of the Philippine Movie Press Club to an

SINGER/P.C5

Singer Ogie . . .

(From page C4)

nounce their choices tonight.

It's a close fight for the best actress plum among Lorna Tolentino ("Abakada Ina"), Amy Austria ("Bagong Buwan") and Rosanna Roces ("La Vida Rosa") who might just pull the biggest surprise of the evening. A tie is a big possibility.

We hope Jaclyn Jose will at least take home the supporting actress award despite the presence of the late Nida Blanca's name on the list (obviously for sentimental reasons). If there is one actress who should give Jose a tough fight, it shouldn't be Blanca but the unknown Irma Adlawan for her bravura performance in "Tuhog."

Joey Reyes deserves the best director trophy for "Minsan May Isang Puso" and he will likely slug it out with Roy Iglesias ("La Vida Rosa") and Lav Diaz ("Batang Westside") for the Best Screenplay award.

'Straight Talk' flies high

We caught recent episodes of Cito Beltran's "Straight Talk" on cable and we liked them . The first featured broadcast journalists Pinky

SINGER/P. C6

British actors Jason Isaacs and Kenneth Branagh to star in second installment of 'Harry Potter'

LOS ANGELES—British actors Jason Isaacs, who played the villain in American civil war film "The Patriot," and Kenneth Branagh will star in the next in the series of "Harry Potter" movies, producers said Monday.

Boy wizard

The new film, "Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets," is scheduled for release in November, a year after the release for the first smash hit picture about the English boy wizard, "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone."

Isaacs, who also stars in combat drama "Black Hawk Down" and "The End of the Affair," will play the malevolent Lucius Malfoy, the father of Harry's nemesis Draco Malfoy in the Warner Bros. film.

Shakespearean actor, director and writer Branagh will take the role of Professor Gilderoy Lockhart, an egotistical new teacher of defense against the dark arts at Harry's magical Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

Branagh has starred in films such as "Hamlet," which he also directed, "Wild Wild West" and "Mary Shelley's Frankenstein."

"Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone" was the biggest grossing movie of last year and second best performing film in history, taking more than $930 million around the world so far.

The celluloid version of the second book in Scot author J.K. Rowling's best-selling series, "Chamber of Secrets" tracks the adventures of young magical apprentice Harry in their second year at Hogwarts.

New dark force

British child actors Daniel Radcliffe will reprise his role as Harry in the new film, as will Rupert Grint and Emma Watson, as Harry's pals Ron Weasley and Hermione Granger, to fight a new dark force at the school.

BRANAGH. Plays egotistical teacher.

Other actors joining the cast in the new "Harry Potter" include Miriam Margolyes, Mark Williams, Shirley Henderson and Gemma Jones, who starred in "Bridget Jones' Diary," "Wilde" and "Sense and Sensibility."

Reprising their "Harry Potter" roles are John Cleese as Nearly Headless Nick, Robbie Coltrane as the gentle giant Hagrid, Warwick Davis as Master of Levitation Professor Flitwick and Richard Griffiths as Harry's Uncle Vernon.

Also returning will be Irish star Richard Harris as Hogwarts' all-knowing Professor Dumbledore, Alan Rickman as the enigmatic Potions Professor Snape, Dame Maggie Smith as Professor McGonagall and Julie Walters as Mrs. Weasley.

The film, like the first in the series, will be directed by Chris Columbus and produced by David Heyman and is expected to generate as many dollars and as much of a social phenomenon as the "Sorcerer's Stone." *AFP*

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JEREMY Irons reacts as he receives the Cesar of honor.

'Amelie' is best picture at French film awards

PARIS—France's whimsical romance "Amelie," a big hit at home and overseas, won best picture at the Cesar awards, the French equivalent of the Oscars.

Creative comedy

The creative comedy also won for best director, Jean-Pierre Jeunet. But its much-praised star, Audrey Tautou, was passed over for best actress in favor of Emmanuelle Devos in "Sur Mes Levres (Read My Lips)."

"Amelie" won two other awards at the ceremony Saturday evening—for music and art direction. It had received a record 13 nominations.

Already the top-grossing French film ever in the United States, "Amelie" is a leading candidate for best foreign film at the Oscars on March 24.

Imaginative ways

The film, which has broken box-office records in France, stars Tautou as a shy and quirky young woman who goes about improving the lives of those around her in imaginative ways—but lacks the courage to pursue the object of her affections.

Best actor went to Michel Bouquet in "Comment J'ai Tue Mon Pere (How I Killed My Father)." The award for best foreign film went to David Lynch's "Mulholland Drive."

Honorary Cesars were presented to British actor Jeremy Irons, who made his acceptance speech in French, actor Claude Rich and actress Anouk Aimee. *AP*

Soulful . . .

(From page C4)

fashion" as the band sought to make music that was not only successful, but also connected with fans.

Friends

Asked to comment on whether U2 had made good on his boast at last year's Grammys that it was reapplying for the job as the best band in the world, Bono joked, "Yes, as it happens, but some of our friends are very good, too."

U2 won the rock album award for its 10 million-selling opus "All That You Can't Leave Behind." The band's "Elevation" won the Grammy for best performance by a duo or group with vocal, and "Stuck In A Moment You Can't Get Out Of" was honored for pop performance by a duo or group with vocal. *Reuters*

Singer Ogie . . .

(From page C5)

Webb, Chinggay Andrada and Pia Guanio. This one scored high with us since we were able to see Beltran's lighter side and how he brilliantly handled himself despite the presence of the three smart and gorgeous gals.

Among the three ladies in the first batch, it was Webb who gave the most insights although Guanio's sweeping presence and gift of gab will surely make her go places.

The second episode was a one-on-one with Nanette Medved who swept us with her charm, sensibility and depth. The third had Bernardo Bernardo talking about the ups and downs of being gay and popular. And the fourth had Rosanna Roces up close and personal.

Medved had full control of herself. Bernardo was in his usual no-holds-barred state, but he sometimes muddled the conversation by talking too fast. And Roces was transparent and all-heart.

The conversation, line of questioning and the guests' answers were spontaneous, lighthearted and sincere. And as a program host, Beltran certainly knows which questions to ask and he possesses an irreverent charm.

FPJ supports writing workshops

Actor-director Fernando Poe, Jr. is giving his all-out support to the workshop programs of the Screenwriters Guild of the Philippines (SGP).

When we saw him recently for the promo of his film "Batas ng Lansangan," Poe stressed that there is a need to continuously hone the talents of scriptwriters in the entertainment industry. "Writers form part of the real core of a movie, that's why we have to take good care of them," he said.

The on-going workshop, the FPJ Fellowship Seminar in Alternative Scriptwriting, covers film review and criticism, writing for theater, short story, documentary, radio, comics, romance novels, production scripts, telenovelas and feature films. Call Buddy at 941-4210.

Remarkable turnaround for the city

Resident of the night to a motor revv... were surprised to find a g... ride! Witnesses say it has the... of a bullet and a capability to turn upside-down like a hurricane. It rotates 360 degrees, careens down the track of sharp curves in such whirlwind speed.

Experiencing it is now a must among the metropolitan folk. Witnesses claim to hear wild splattering as it speeds, glides, and swoops in its gigantic loop.

Similar structures have bee... reported to rise in other m... cities in the country.

HALF-PET, HALF MACHINE

Unveiled in the Science Museum today is RoboPup -- a lovable pet that's half-dog, half-machine. Dr. Zee, a noted veterinarian famous for reconstructing fractured and damaged ...nal body parts introduced his latest ...boPup can be the cute, playful ...y family would love to have. ...de, he can be as cunning ...as any guard dog -- ...equipped to deal with ...cters in ...ty

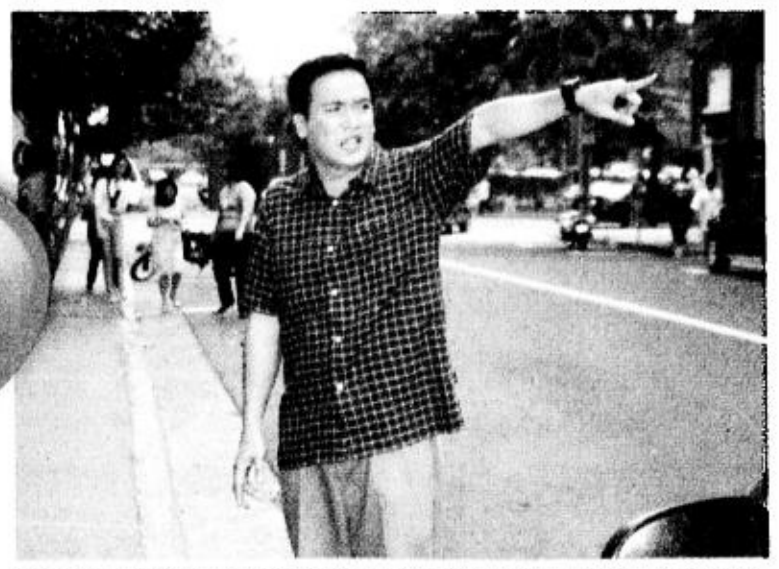
Fr... RoboPu... hearts lik... suspicious... vicinity ...

Friend and protector co... RoboPup is expected to c... like a superhero be as ... sharp as any gua... technologically equipped ... suspicious characters in ... of 500 square meters. be ... and sharp as any guar... technologically equipped ... suspicious ... of 500 sq...

Combi... to capture ... cunni...

New Rainbow Coalit... in ... H...

...p Movement ...unced today its ...ew coalition of ...atoes. Its board ...lly signe...



A neighbor describes what sort of upside-down behaviours are being introduced in the house on the 7th Street. He claims to have seen his neighbors wear their clothes inside-out.

TURN... OF EVENTS ... HOUSE

...hanged. ...ing around town ...house in the heart of ...More and more people are ... strange behaviors and ... manifesting a world ...de-down.

...oan, a neighbor, claims to have ...heard Jake -- the youngest in the ...said household -- boast that he ...ould now do a series of ...dstands. Sightings of him ... around the house on his ...eem to affirm the ...to have ...

address has also been brought to the attention of authorities. Neighbors say the house is being remodelled. Furniture pieces are being reconstructed to stand on their heads; the house, being restructured bottomside-up.

Investigators are looking into evidences that might give them a lead on such behaviors. Neighbors report seeing splatters of a ketchup from a radical upside-down bottle. Given the above claims, it may not be long before we start seeing trucks speed down the highway backwards. Or probably things ...lling upwards.

GMA WELC... NEW COM... IN TH... ...INE!

A gentlemen airs his gratitude with such conviction for the rising incidence of ketchup rave over this new banana tomato blend ketchup combination. He claims it has turned his world upside down.

Greater Manila Area (GMA) residents and the whole nation welcome a new, exciting combination that's finding it's way into the home. It's a combination nobody has ever tasted before. Sweet banana goodness and rich tomato zest come together in new Lady's Choice Banana Tomato Blend Ketchup.

Since its introduction, a rising incidence of hoarding has been observed. A siege of grocery stores takes place everyday. Mothers and kids rush into stores and back into their houses filling up their cupboards with this radical blend.

Elena, mother of two, admits to being one of them. She says her kids, aged 10 and 12, just can't get enough of the hip blend. It's such a hit in her household that her grocery cabinet welcomes this ketchup sensation with open arms.

Everyone's in for new twists and turns in their meals and snacks with the new Lady's Choice Banana Tomato Blend Ketchup. Brace yourselves for a blast, upside down.

First, it reverses the adage that says "You can't have the best of both worlds." This ketchup wonder has both sweet banana goodness and rich tomato zest in one radical blend. It's a naturally sourced blend that has both sweetness and spunk any young ketchup lover would grab.

And then, it's got ketchup literally turned on its head. New Lady's Choice Banana Tomato Blend Ketchup comes in a flip-top, upside down bottle. Eye-catchingly hip, it draws ketchup buffs to enjoy it bottoms up.

Warning: the bottle is squeezable so expect splatter-crazy ketchup freaks splattering snacktown red. What's more it comes sealed with a safety tab to ensure freshness and prevent spillage. Make sure to peal off the seal beneath the cap before you splat.

Splattering the town nationwide, new Lady's Choice Banana Tomato Blend Ketchup is a breakthrough blend in a cool, innovative bottle. It's sure to perk up your table experience and turn your world upside down.

...ON fashion ... includes a yellow-an... ...n fashion statement. Th... ...nt includes applying the color coalition in art expression and house decor.

Soon, posters will be screaming ...ellow-and-red. A new ideology will ...se. New and better coalitions ...ed as inspired by this new ...ment. Hundreds have signified ...pport. Red and yellow ribbons ...ees and such armbands express ...th's new position.

...ks will be held and a new ...chup constitution written to put all past issues to ... ...ns ...

SIGH... HALF-MAN, HALF-HORSE!

This picture is said to be the only proof of sightings of a creature that's ...lf-man, half-horse. Recent sightings coincide with the introduction ... new ketchup combination. Strange days. And more stories to come.

...thern province ...aturday night. ... be a myth. ...l a creature ...d the head ...ains frin... ...r north ...ons in ...own ...ave ...al

apparitions in town. His sudden frequent visits down the mountains are believed to have been brought about by recent illegal logging and deforestation.

Legend has it that the creature roams the forests during hunting season, luring hunters off their trail. It is believed to be the protector of trees and forest wildlife. Literature depicts it rearing, majectic in its godlike demeanor, aiming an arrow.

In other regions, people in fishing villages claim sightings of a creature ...alf-fish, half-human.

Mang Alfredo, a farmer recalled ...encounter with the legendary ...ure. Having ran out of wood for ...g, he set out very early at dawn. ... hours had passed before he ...e was running into the same ...nd over again. And so he ... rest with this nagging ...r. He heard hooves. To ...t, he looked up to see ...ure gleaming in the ... that peep through ...trees. There and ... been transported ... as it was, he ...had suddenly ...tead there ...ranquility. ...up. He ...am from ...se lying ...of dried ... felt such ... never had ...f the forest. ...relate similar ... report having ...months when in their ...-like encounter with the creature, they felt they had been gone for only an hour. Strange. But as of this writing and judging from ongoing research, this writer cannot help but somehow believe.

MS. WARI TURNS ANEW

A certain Ms. Wari has turned anew. Now, she and her family are switching to a radical lifestyle which means doing away with their old ketchup.

On the lookout for an adventure, her younger brothers Miggy and Tim - 12 and 11 -- came across this upside-down banana tomato blend ketchup. Since then, she says, the Wari boys were never the same again. They would flip and tumble around the garden, make the dog roll over and over, turn petty arguments this way and that way before coming to an agreement, and see things from a different perspective. If anything, she has noticed her brothers turn more spirited and smart.

Today, Ms. Wari vows to be like her brothers. She has managed to turn away from her old boring days with her old ketchup. She vows to be more adventurous, full of life, turn things upside-down and enjoy life like never before.

COMMUNITY CONVENTION 2002

Ms. Wari signs a petition at the Barangay Hall to adopt this youthful perspective in life made possible by her younger brothers' exciting new behavior. she vows to support such movement.

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SATURDAY Special

BOB Dylan's "Highway 61 Revisited" made it to the list.

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Dylan and Nelson head Grammy Hall of Fame honors

By Steve Gorman

LOS ANGELES—Recording classics ranging from Bob Dylan's first full-fledged rock album to Willie Nelson's breakthrough "Red Headed Stranger" to Bing Crosby's "Swinging On a Star" were inducted on Thursday into the Grammy Hall of Fame.

55 recordings

Dylan's 1965 collection, "Highway 61 Revisited," Nelson's 1975 country concept album about a preacher on the run and Crosby's playful pop single from 1944 were among 55 recordings to receive Hall of Fame Awards this year.

The 15 albums and 40 singles bring to 585 the number of titles recognized since 1973 by the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences for their enduring artistic quality and cultural influence.

"Highway 61 Revisited" marked Dylan's full-blown transformation from folk icon to rock troubadour, while "Red Headed Stranger" made Nelson a star and helped launch the "outlaw" country movement that broke with Nashville's recording establishment.

Other entries, such as "Swinging on a Star," "What Kind of Fool Am I?" by Sammy Davis Jr. (1962) and the King Cole Trio's rendition of "Route 66" (1946) became embedded in America's pop repertoire by virtue of sheer catchiness.

More chronologically diverse

Unlike last year, when all but two inductees hailed from the 1950s and '60s, the 2002 list was more chronologically diverse with songs and albums spanning six decades.

The earliest recording to make the list this year was Al Jolson's "Sonny Boy" from 1928. The most recent was Stevie Wonder's 1976 album "Songs in the Key of Life."

Still, the '60s account for the bulk of entries, including the Doors' seminal debut album, the pioneering self-titled release from rock/jazz combo Blood, Sweat & Tears, folk legend Pete Seeger's plea for peace, "Where Have All the Flowers Gone," and Steppenwolf's ultimate paean to rebellion, "Born to Be Wild."

Other rock standards include Don McLean's lengthy and endlessly dissected Buddy Holly tribute "American Pie," Little Richard's raucous "Lucille" and Janis Joplin's bluesy classic "Me and Bobby McGee."

Also making the cut were pop favorites as Roy Orbison's "Crying" (1961), Johnny Mathis' "Misty," Elvis Presley's "Don't Be Cruel" (1956) , James Taylor's "Sweet Baby James" and "Tears of a Clown" by Smokey Robinson & the Miracles.

Swinging style

Jazz was represented in swinging style by Ella Fitrzgerald's 1960 recording of "How High the Moon" and the 1939 classic "Woodchopper's Ball" by clarinetist Woody Herman and his Orchestra.

Rhythm and blues made the list with Ben E. King's "Spanish Harlem," Marvin Gaye's environmental lament "Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology)" and Rufus Thomas' "Walking the Dog," which helped define Memphis souls and paved the way for funk.

On a classical note, the list includes album recordings of Vivaldi's "The Four Seasons" featuring violinist Louis Kaufman and the live performance of legendary pianist Vladimir Horowitz at Carnegies Hall in 1965, considered one of the most important "event: records of the 20th century.

The Beatles remain one of the most honored acts in the Hall of Fame with another entry this year, 1966's haunting "Eleonor Rigby." ***Reuters***

DYLAN. From folk icon to rock troubadour.

Getting to know the real Robert Seña

By Nestor U. Torre

ROBERT Seña's self-titled second album is a vast improvement over his first, because it does not second-guess music fans' fickle preferences and instead sticks with songs that best suit his unique voice, and most fully showcase his full range as a musical performer.

Inspiring song

Thus, the album leads off with "Impossible Dream," not just a song with a lot of notes to show off Robert's high register, but also an inspiring song that effectively captures his spirituality.

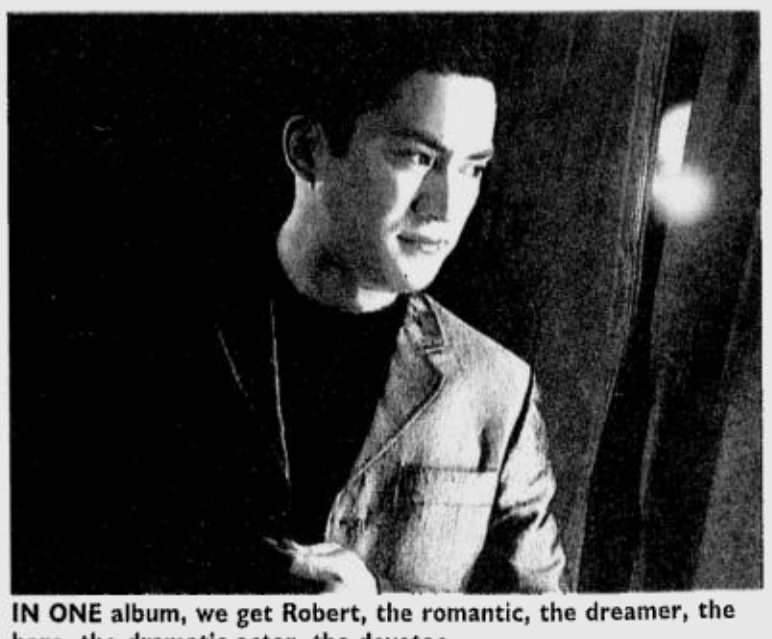
Some songs by Vehnee Saturno and other Filipino composers demonstrate Robert's innate romanticism and emotionalism. He may have performed abroad in world-class musicals for over 10 years, but he remains Filipino to his core, and this is evident in the personal way he interprets these homegrown compositions.

Stevie Wonder's "Lately" is, as his friends would affirm, "very Robert"—laid-back but heartfelt, and honest about his feelings. "I'm a man of many wishes"—that's Robert. And, "What I really feel, my eyes won't let me hide" really hits the bullseye.

Chiaroscuro

"The Windmills of Your Mind" gives the singer the chance to go "musically psychological," as he uses his remarkable vocal instrument to aurally paint the moody, volatile chiaroscuro of Michel Legrand's pop masterpiece.

"Like a circle in a spiral... never ending or beginning... as the images unwind"—as these jagged bits of psycho-poetry are sung, we get a clearer sense of Robert not just as a singer but as a complex actor—and human being.



IN ONE album, we get Robert, the romantic, the dreamer, the hero, the dramatic actor, the devotee.

This is no crooner warming listeners' hearts with romantic turns of phrase and music, but a larger-than-life operatic performer in the modern manner, vocally and psychologically attuned to the dark interstices and contradictions of the human condition.

Musical event

Listening to Robert giving full justice to this psychologically complicated song, we wish that a gifted composer would write a dramatic modern opera for Robert to perform. That would be quite a musical event, and only gifted actor-singers like Robert could do justice to it.

Confirming our appreciation of Robert's emotional intelligence as a performer is "Ultimo Adios," Rizal's valedictory poem set to music (from the musical, "Sino Ka Ba, Jose Rizal?"). Robert's rendition is quietly but intensely heroic, perfectly in keeping with the thoughts and feelings of the noble Filipino on the eve of his supreme immolation of self for country.

Breezy respite

In radical contrast, "Kool Ka Lang" takes us back to the laid-back Robert, a breezy respite before the album focuses even more strongly on Robert's spiritual side, ending with two religious songs, "No Mas Amor Que El Tuyo" and "Our Father/ I Believe."

Thus, in one album, we get Robert the romantic, the dreamer, the happy-go-lucky person, the hero, the dramatic actor, the devotee—in other words, the compleat musical performer. Through this second attempt at musical profiling, listeners finally get to know the real Robert Seña.

Three TV-film luminaries share their beauty secrets

SANTOS. To stay beautiful, one needs peace of mind.

By Mary Ann A. Bautista

THEY say that beauty is in the eye of the beholder and that true beauty comes from within. True, you have to be beautiful inside to radiate that beauty on the outside. But you also need to help nature along. You can take care of your physical appearance without being too vain. Here, we've asked celebrities to share their beauty secrets and practices:

Ina Raymundo

If I'm stressed out, I make it a point to rest. I go out-of-town. *Minsan, sa* beach *ako nakaka*-relax. If I can't do that, I just stay at home. As much as possible, *ayoko munang tumanggap ng trabaho*. I rest for two to three days.

When I'm depressed, I watch feel-good movies. I love watching "Pretty Woman," "Sleepless in Seattle," "While You Were Sleeping," "Love Affair," and "Titanic." *Pero kapag grabe ang* low point *ko*, I can't watch "Titanic," *kasi lalo lang akong nade*-depress. *Gusto ko yung mga* light movies, *ayoko yung masyadong nababagabag ang aking kalooban*. I cry easily when I watch those movies but I don't cry when I watch soap operas.

My other beauty secret: I use lotion everyday. *Lagi akong may baong* body lotion wherever I go. *Basta maramdaman ko na* dry *na ang* skin *ko*, I apply lotion right away. *Mahilig din ako sa mga* body oils at gels.

I like reading or going out with friends. I know that sleeping late is bad for your skin but it's in my system already. I can't sleep early, not unless I take sleeping pills. But I don't like taking drugs so *nagpupuyat na lang ako*. Being beautiful comes naturally when you enjoy yourself and you enjoy life.

I also enjoy pampering myself. I love wearing beautiful clothes. I love buying clothes. *Ang dami kong damit na hindi ko pa nasusuot*, but I keep on buying because I can't resist it. *Basta gusto ko yung* design, I buy it. I go for comfort and style. I also love lovely underwear. *Di ba kapag maganda ang* undies *mo*, you feel good?

I also don't deprive myself. What I eat depends on my mood. *May* times, I crave for Filipino, Chinese, Japanese or Italian food and I give in to what my body wants.

Yes, I believe that cosmetic surgery can make you look better but I have this fear of experiencing side effects, so I wouldn't want to undergo cosmetic surgery. *Minsan binibiro ko yung mga* friends *ko na kapag tumaba ako* when I get old, *baka subukan ko yung* cosmetic surgery, if I can afford it.

But I'm not a vain person. *Gusto kong mag-ayos pero* not to the point of looking at myself every minute in the mirror. *Kapag nasa bahay lang ako*, I'm very simple.

I also believe that if you're a sweet, kind and caring person, you can't help but be pretty, *kasi nagkakaroon ka ng* glow. You also need to have peace of mind.

Gladys Reyes

Mabilis akong magka-pimples *at magka*-rashes *kapag napupuyat ako*, so I make it a point to go to a dermatologist. When I take a bath, I rub five pieces of *calamansi* on my armpits, neck, elbows and heels. *Basta yung mga parteng pinagpapawisan, nilalagyan ko para hindi mangitim. Kailangan yung* calamansi juice *at* pulp bits *ang i*-rub *mo kasi* if you use the skin, *magagasgas naman ang balat* mo.

Importante ding magkaroon ka ng outlet, a hobby *para hindi ka ma*-bore. You have to be productive all the time without abusing your body. *Basta kailangang balansehin mo lahat ng bagay-bagay araw-araw*.

Judy Ann Santos

After taping or shooting, I remove my make-up with baby oil. If I'm really tired and I look haggard, I just splash fresh milk on my face. Milk helps my face relax. *Gumaganda ang* aura *mo kapag* relaxed *ang* face mo.

I try to rest when I don't have work. If I stay home, I don't take a bath right away. *Naliligo lang ako kapag matutulog na ako sa gabi*. I also go rock-climbing with my *kuya* (Jeffrey Santos). Every Holy Week, we go mountain climbing at Mount Banahaw. This year, I plan to visit the *Banal na ilog*.

Importante sa isang tao na magkaroon ng spiritual side. *Noong* first time *kong umakyat sa* Mount Banahaw, everyone was telling me *na pumasok ako sa kuweba at kung makasalanan ako, mahihirapan akong lumabas. Noong pumasok ako, akala ko hindi na ako makakalabas,* but after that I was granted three wishes. *Iba ang* feeling *mo kapag nakaakyat ka ng bundok*.

To stay beautiful, you have to have peace of mind and inner strength, if you have that, you may grow old but you'll grow old gracefully. ***(To be concluded)***

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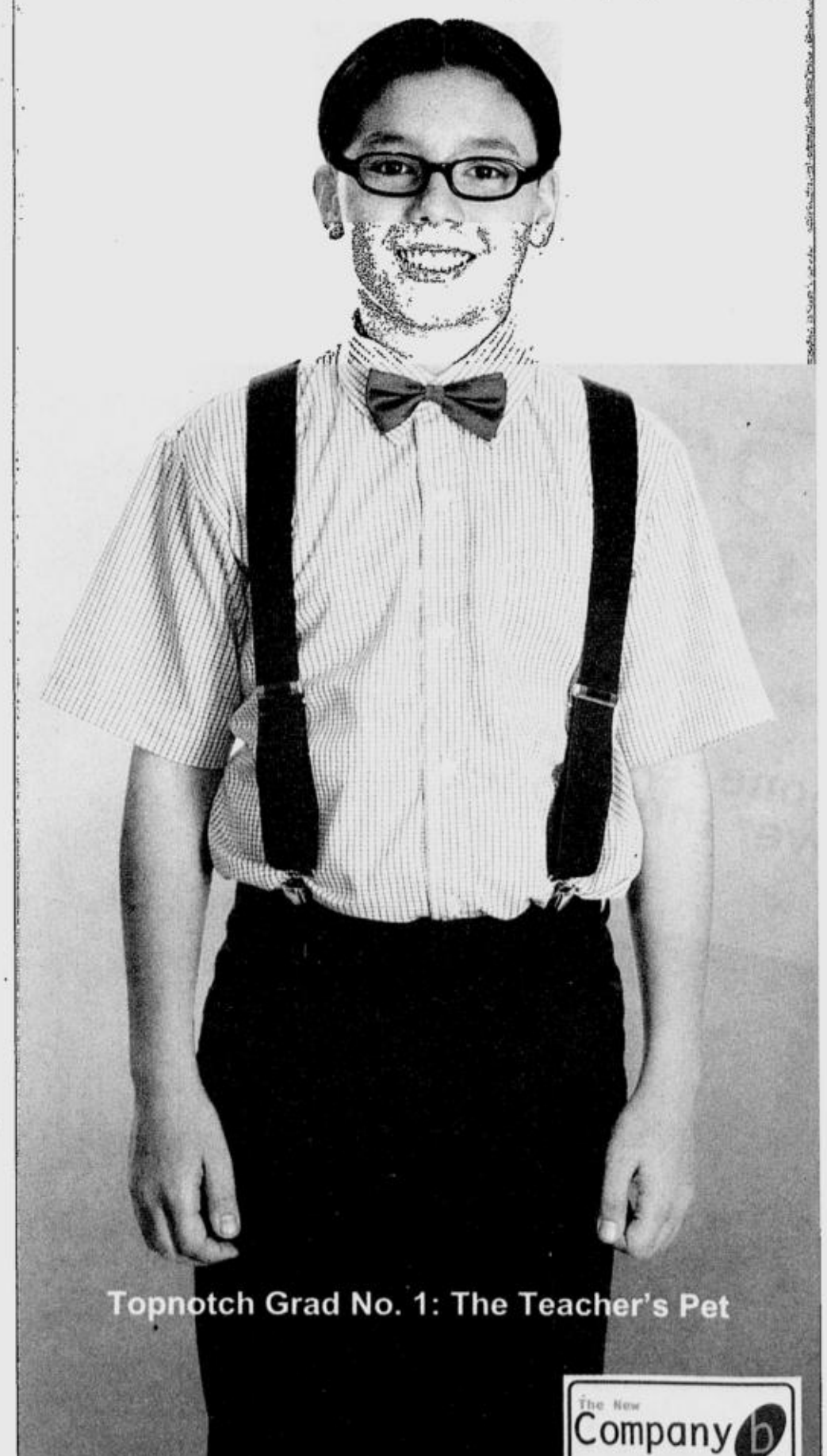

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Sharon, Regine perform in separate concerts

By Edmund L. Sicam

SHARON Cuneta and Regine Velasquez are two of the brightest stars in the show biz firmament. Their movies have done exceedingly well at the box office and their concerts are usually sold-out affairs.

Crossover production

This month, the two will appear in separate concerts that are expected to be crowd-drawers. Regine will headline a Crossover production at the Captain's Bar of the Mandarin Oriental at 8 p.m. The Songbird is a favorite of the radio network, which has featured her in several provincial tours either as main star or special guest.

This time, Regine will be featured in an intimate session with such hits as "Say You Love Me," "So Much in Love," "Man on My Mind" and "Soft Melody" plus R&B and contemporary jazz tunes. She will be reunited with musical director Gerard Salonga and other musical artists like Mel Villena on saxophone, Bobby Taylo on bass, Cesar Aguas on guitar, and Roy Mercado on drums with special guest Antonio Maigue, and Opera providing vocal back-up.

Joining her is comedienne Tessie Tomas who will do several humorous sketches. She may even do a number with Regine, who can be a comedian if she wants to.

Funny moments

Actually, Regine's funnier moments come when she is not scripted in her concerts. Recently, she tried working with prepared lines in her tribute to motion picture soundtracks, but that didn't succeed because she came out stiff. She's at her best when she interacts with her live concert audience because she can make so many surprising comments in her deadpan voice.

THE MEGASTAR AND THE SONGBIRD. Crowd-drawers both.

Regine is now preparing for the return of the much-revered composer Michel Legrand, who is set to do an album as well as a concert tour with her in a few months.

Understandably, the Songbird is excited about this upcoming project and she is counting the days till the maestro flies back to the Philippines.

Meanwhile, the Megastar will be performing at a much bigger venue, the PICC Plenary Hall, on March 15 and 16 at 8 p.m. Along with Side A's Joey Generoso, she will be guesting in "Jim Brickman: Simple Things." Brickman, who penned well-loved tunes such as "Valentine," "Big Heart" and "The Gift," will be in town to promote his latest album, "Simple Things" for BMG Records.

Collaboration

Sharon and Jim collaborated on two songs for the Megastar's latest album, "All I Ever Want" under BMG. The carrier single "Where's the Good in Goodbye" and "In Your Eyes," her duet with Hong Kong superstar Andy Lau are Brickman compositions. The two met for the first time last year when the songs were recorded in Hong Kong.

Joey G., in the meantime, has also collaborated with other foreign acts in the past, the most recent of which was his guest stint in the concert of David Benoit. Call 891-5610.

Keempee de Leon finds his place in the biz

By Jocelyn Valle

KEEMPEE de Leon's earliest dream was to become a priest. "*Nag-sakristan pa ako for* six years," he points out, and his naturally soft voice succeeds in convincing us. "*Kaya lang, sabi ng* mommy *ko* (actress Daria Ramirez) *hindi daw ako makakapag-asawa 'pag nag-pari ako*."

Naughty kid

That would be unthinkable for a naughty kid like him. "From prep to elementary school," he recalls, "*nanglililis ako ng palda ng mga* classmate *ko. Minsan nga, nasabunutan pa ako ng* crush *ko na anak ng direktor*." (He would later have a string of romantic relationships with pretty actresses like Vina Morales, Carmina Villaroel, Manilyn Reynes, Jessa Zaragosa and Ina Raymundo.)

No wonder the 29-year-old actor-singer is in the cast of ABS-CBN's new comedy program, "Klasmeyts" (Wednesdays, 9:30 p.m.), along with Herbert Bautista, Bayani Agbayani, Michael Flores and Paolo Contis. Beneath his good-boy looks and demeanor lie impish irreverence and brashness.

Punchlines

Keempee's crazy self only takes over when he's delivering punchlines. "*Basta lumalabas na lang*," he grins. He's thankful that he's built up rapport with his castmates. He's worked with Herbert in a couple of comedies for Viva Films, while "Klasmeyts" is his first time to work with Bayani, Michael and Paolo.

They all agree that it's an advantage to tape the show's gags, sketches, spoofs and other hilarious situations before a live studio audience, which is composed of real students.

DE LEON. Wanted to become a priest.

The "Klasmeyts" format is not new to Keempee. He was part of the latter years of "Todas," one of local TV's memorable comedy shows. Who can ever forget its knock-knock jokes and use-in-a-sentence wisecracks? (You have to be at least in your 20s, though.)

The stint was a good training ground for the newcomer who seemed to be following in the footsteps of his dad, comedian-songwriter Joey de Leon, "Todas" being the first of several projects that featured father and son. Keempee shares that he and his dad have similar ways in reacting to jokes.

Pointers

He adds that the veteran funnyman readily commends him for a good performance and is also generous with pointers for him to use to improve his work. He's also learned how to interact with different kinds of people while remaining true to himself.

Thus, Keempee was more than ready when he starred in the sitcom "Iskul Bukol, Book 2" and gag shows "Tropang Trumpo" and "Going Bayabas." He was also able to record two albums, act in movies of varied genres (from youthful comedies like "Wooly-Booly" to action flicks like "Batang Riles" and romantic dramas like "Nag-iisang Ikaw") and headline a soap opera ("Villa Quintana," opposite Donna Cruz).

Versatile

"I really want to be versatile," he tells us. Aside from "Klasmeyts," he is also part of Channel 2's Saturday-afternoon drama series, "Munting Paraiso." He recently signed up with Star Records and for his next album, he'll deviate from his usual repertoire of ballads and try pop and R&B. The change makes him more excited to go back to the recording studio.

"I never really thought that I could be an actor or a singer," he avers. After junking his original dream of serving God, Keempee recalls that he wanted to become a member of the Air Force. He soon changed his mind and set his sights on the medical profession—until he realized that he couldn't stand the sight of blood.

Keempee finally got the answer when he joined German Moreno's "That's Entertainment" in 1986. And though his career had its low points, he never thought of giving up. He's found his place in show business and he's here to stay.

Romy Vitug celebrates female form in Tan's 'Eskandalosa'

By Edmund L. Sicam

VITUG. Cinematographer of choice.

A BOLDIE, "Eskandalosa," opened strongly at the box office last Wednesday and that's surprising, considering that sexy movies haven't been doing well unless Assunta De Rossi is in them. This one, directed by JovenTan, stars Barbara Milano and lines have been forming at theaters to see her bold scenes with screen studs like Leandro Baldemor, John Apacible and the late Ricky Belmonte.

Popularity

Three factors seem to have contributed to the movie's popularity. One, there is the semblance of a storyline, though the "Rashomon" concept slows down the narrative with its repetitious sequences, and the twist at the end is similar to "The Others."

Two, the MTRCB has allowed liberal amounts of nudity and lovemaking which are, however, not comparable to the more explicit scenes in "Sutla" and "Live Show."

Three, and most importantly, the film was photographed by Romy Vitug.

In Vitug's hands, the nudity and sex scenes in "Eskandalosa do not look "*malaswa*" and it is obvious that he took time and effort to light the scenes and position his camera. It's definitely not a quickie where the most important thing is to show nude bodies no matter how badly-shot they are. Vitug's visuals are a celebration of the female form and the act of love. One particularly impressive scene shows Milano and Baldemor making love in a nipa hut with the light streaking through bamboo slats.

Erotic film artists

His cinematography reminds us of two erotic film artists, David Hamilton and Franco Giacobetti who, like Vitug, started out as still photographers. Hamilton was known for his hazy cinematography and direction in the 1980s in films like ""Premieres Desirs" (First Desires) and "Tendres Cousines" (Cousins in Love). Giacobetti became famous for directing "Emmanuelle 2," with its vivid visuals shot like commercials. He also did a lot of nude pictorials for Playboy magazine.

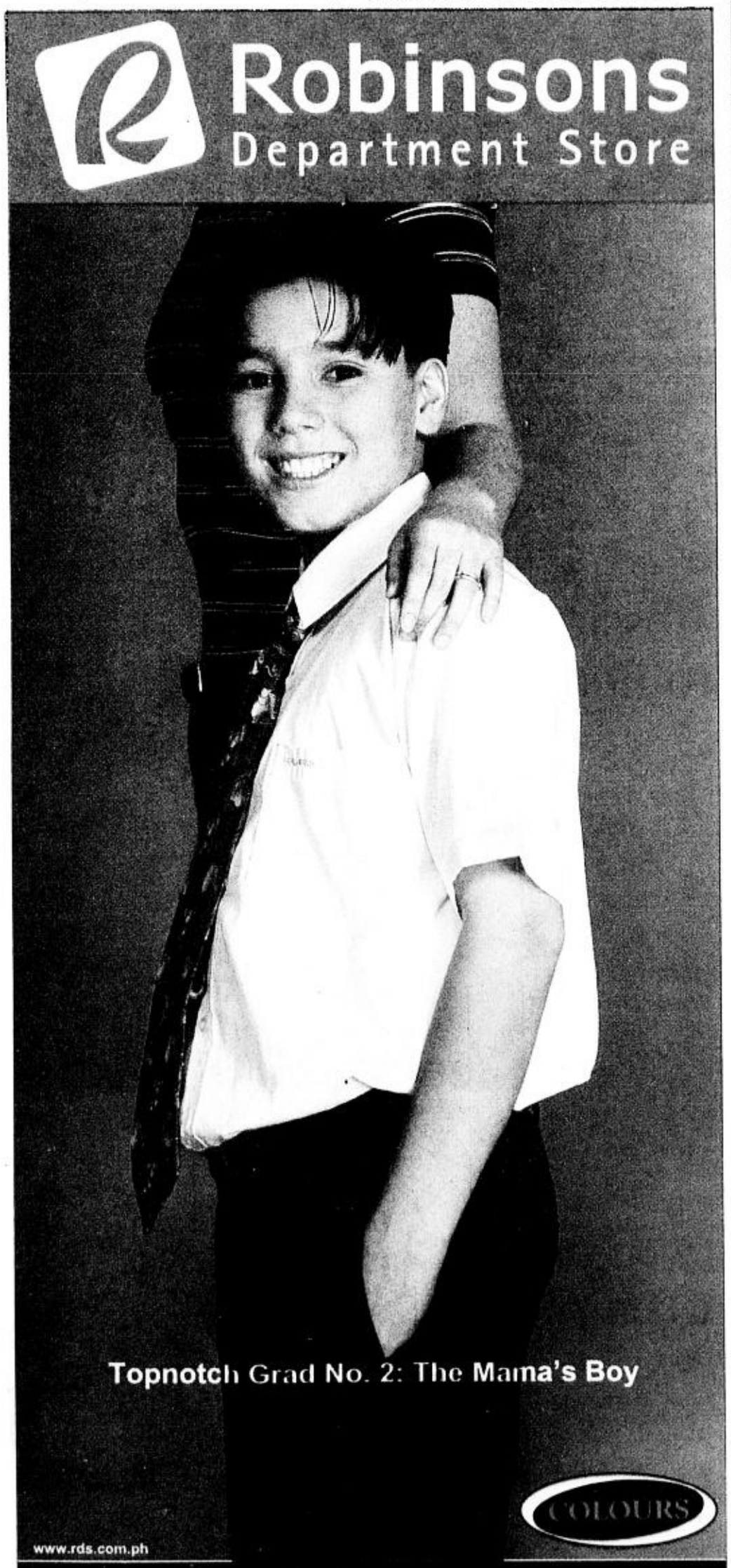
Unlike the two, however, Vitug is known for a variety of styles—gritty pictorials as well as beautiful scenery. We remember his many shots of sunset at Manila Bay that were really outstanding. We looked at close to a hundred slides, each one different from the rest. He graduated into filming documentaries like the much-admired "The Rites of Summer," on the Lenten season in the Philippines. This was aired on ABC-5 in the early '70s. When he ventured into cinematography, it didn't take long before the industry took notice. Proof of his stature in the business are the many awards he has received for his outstanding work.

Typecast

Lately, he has been the cinematographer of choice of directors of bold movies. We're sure that Vitug would not want to be typecast in this genre but since the industry is in the doldrums, he probably has had to accept what comes along. He has another one coming from Seiko Films called "Itlog," which stars a new sexy star, Diana Zubiri. Vitug excels once more in this boldie and if ever Diana hits it big in the movies, she has Vitug and director Francis "Jun" Posadas to thank for the many flattering shots taken of her. A colleague tells us that , in person, Diana is rather simple and quite shy, but Vitug is able to project her sensually and give her a classy look in this movie.

Lighting has a lot to do with it and this is where Vitug is a master. In "Itlog," the love scenes are shot with minimal props. One scene takes place during a brownout, so the only illumination comes from the lightning. The passionate scenes fade in and out at a fast clip. The camera does not linger on the actors' bodies.

We hear that "Got2Believe" and FPJ's "Batas ng Lansangan" are both doing well at the box office, signs that moviegoers will patronize projects that are well-made. This should encourage producers to come up with more quality movies, and we know that Vitug will be at the top of the list when the choice of cinematographer is made--not just for bold movies but for other genres as well.



Revisiting 'The Matrix'

By Edmund L. Sicam

IF you're still reeling from the effects of "The Matrix" two years after its showing and can't wait for the sequel to hit the screens later this year, then getting a VCD or DVD copy of "The Matrix Revisited" may just be the thing to tide you over until you get your next fix.

Exciting docu

The documentary on the making of the precedent-setting movie is almost as exciting as "The Matrix" itself since it's not your usual "the making of" feature which usually lasts half an hour and shows a lot of film clips from the actual movie. When we first got the VCD, we thought it also contained the feature film since there were three CDs in the case. There was no movie, only the docu.

It's all about what happened behind-the-scenes from the conception to post-production as well as a sneak preview of "Matrix II." Total running time: 136 minutes. The DVD version has special hidden features plus a web-enabled program linking DVD-ROM PC users to whatisthematrix.com for the latest updates and future online events. Of course, there are excerpts from "Matrix 1" but these are short and are used mainly to illustrate points made by the documentary.

For instance, we never knew that Keanu Reeves suffered a neck injury while filming, and they had to shoot around him for a while. There are shots of him with a neck brace as well as actual footage of Keanu and Lawrence Fishburne doing martial arts sparring.

In one segment, Keanu is terribly frustrated because he can't do a routine due to his injury. It took several takes before the Wachowski brothers (Larry and Andy) okayed the shot.

Special effects

We are able to see how the special effects were accomplished, such as the use of hundreds of still cameras to show Keanu, for instance, dodging the bullets in slow motion. The docu intercuts between the rough cut and the final product as it appears on the screen. There is extensive use of the green screen to accomplish the many special effects used in the film.

We learn that the Wachowski brothers had a difficult time selling the idea to the studios because much of the concept was in their heads and simple illustrations could not capture what they really wanted to do with the film. Besides, they did not have a track record in sci-fi movies requiring loads of special effects. They were known for "Bound," which was more of a gangster movie that featured a lesbian couple (Jennifer Tilly and Gina Gershon) going against the mob.

The much-hyped martial arts experts form Hong Kong are prominently featured in the piece. We experience the hardships Keanu, Carrie-Ann Moss and Lawrence Fishburne had to undergo to accomplish the impressive action scenes. They had to go through weeks of daily martial arts training to be in shape for the shooting, until it became second nature to them.

Bad guys

Your jaw drops as onscreen, Carrie and Keanu defy gravity as they kick the bad guys. When we look behind the scenes, we admire the hard work put into the seemingly simple sequence. It actually involved cables that made the actors seem to float on air. However, the timing had to be perfect so the Wachowskis could get what they want. We are shown shot after shot of miscues and wrong moves before success was achieved.

We learn that the Wachowksi are sticklers for making storyboards, so that when the cameras roll, no time is wasted. The docu matches the illustrations and the actual shots to show how close they are to each other.

There is a feature on the costumes and the choice of material that would enable the actors to move efficiently in the action scenes, and the choice of colors to signify characters, as well as the atmosphere the directors wanted to create.

There is also a segment on the philosophy behind "The Matrix" and its spiritual undertones. The actors had to read various books related to spirituality before they faced the cameras. The concepts are all based on Oriental ideas such as those expounded by Buddhists.

Choice of music

"Revisited" also features how the music was chosen, what the sound engineers did to get the right audio effects, the production designer's massive structures, and other production elements that made us realize that a movie involves not just the actors onscreen but also hundreds of crew members behind the cameras.

All in all, "The Matrix Revisited" is a fascinating look at how a trendsetting movie made it to the screen.

"MATRIX" stars Carrie-Ann Moss, Keanu Reeves and Lawrence Fishburne.

Busy March schedule for Anna Fegi

YOUNG singer Anna Fegi, who is beginning to make her mark in local music through her curly mane and powerful voice, follows up her Valentine gigs last month, with a full calendar for March.

Shows

Her performance schedule started with a show in Batangas City last March 8, at Butch Bar and Restaurant. It will be followed by CitiLite's "City Jazz N Grooves" March 19 at Jazz Central, Jupiter, Makati; and "Lite Rock at Hard Rock" March 20 with Calvin Millado, March 23 in "Clash-Sical" at the UP Theater with Wolfgang and The Manila Symphony Orchestra, and a Palm Sunday show at Arkdia with Dulce and Rannie Raymundo.

Anna also continues performing in corporate shows. After gracing the PAL Golf Tournament in Bacolod last March 2 and the Globe Sales night March 7, she will be at the Coke Convention on March 22.

FEGI. Promoting second single.

Remake

She is also promoting her maiden album "Anna Fegi: Every Step of the Way" from BMG Records, with the second single "Anyone Can See," a remake of Irene Cara's original, now enjoying massive airplay. She is also part of the new Coke commercial. Schedules for the summer include out-of-town trips, more shows, and a musical-theater outing in the second half of the year.

Her manager is Bibsy Carballo (721-0801).

ENTERTAINMENT BOOKSHELF

'Inventing Champagne: The Worlds of Lerner and Loewe' is fascinating

By Noelani Torre

IN-DEPTH and exhaustively researched, Gene Lees' biography of two major figures in American musical theater—Alan Jay Lerner and Fritz Loewe—is a fascinating, meaty read.

Combined talents

"Inventing Champagne: The Worlds of Lerner and Loewe" (St. Martin's Press, New York) chronicles the celebrated partnership of lyricist/librettist Lerner and composer Loewe, whose combined talents gave birth to such well-loved classics as "Brigadoon," "My Fair Lady," "Gigi," and "Camelot," among others.

The author, Gene Lees, is a prolific and respected lyricist, songwriter, vocalist, and journalist. A two-time winner of the ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award for his writing in the field of American music, he was the first to translate bossa nova songs and his work has been recorded by such artists as Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett, Peggy Lee, Sarah Vaughan, and Carmen McRae, to name a few.

Lees has also published short stories, a novel, and other books on music including "Meet Me at Jim and Andy's: Jazz Musicians and Their World," "Singers and the Song," and "The Modern Rhyming Dictionary: How To Write Lyrics."

Publisher

He is the founder and publisher of the influential "Jazzletter," a monthly journal with no advertising and full of good writing on all aspects of high-class popular music and with an international following among critics, musicians and academics.

"Inventing Champagne" is one of the several biographies he has written; the others are biographies of Oscar Peterson ("The Will to Swing") and Woody Herman ("Leader of the Band"). Praised for the "technical knowledge of the music," "highly literate criticism" and "accomplished storytelling" evident in his previous books, Lees doesn't fail to deliver similar fare in "Champagne."

While tracing the rise and development of the careers of Lerner and Loewe, Lees also delves into their complex and fascinating personal lives, revealing their basic characters and the forces that shaped them. However, throughout the book, more attention is centered on Lerner, who appeared to be the more public personality of the two. As Lees himself explains in the book's preface:

"Loewe wrote music for only six stage musicals, five of them with Lerner, and two films, and retired early. Lerner wrote book and lyrics for 13 stage musicals and the scripts for six movies, two of which he produced, and he published two books.

Flamboyant

"He did far more work away from Loewe than he did with him, collaborating with some of the best-known names in film and theater music . . . Loewe kept his private life very private indeed, whereas Alan's was flamboyant, making incessant headlines. Fritz avoided publicity; Alan relished it.

"Fritz dropped out of show business almost entirely, occasionally turning up now and then to offer comment on Alan's life, rather like a Greek chorus, then leaving the stage again. It was inevitable that Lerner would dominate this book."

Theater being a collaborative art, the book names more than just Lerner and Loewe. Important figures in their professional and private lives are frequently touched on and discussed as well.

Apart from parents, spouses and non-theatrical friends, noted theater and film personalities played large roles in the lives of Lerner and Loewe. Among these famous faces are those of John Barry, Leonard Bernstein, Burton Lane, André Previn, Richard Rodgers, Oscar Hammerstein, Charles Strouse, Kurt Weill, Moss Hart, Julie Andrews, Rex Harrison, Richard Burton, Gene Kelly, and Leslie Caron.

Directors, composers, and actors, their own individual stories add more color and depth to an already rich narrative.

Backstage

Taking the reader firmly by the hand, Lees guides us backstage to experience intimately the joys and tribulations in creating and staging a musical. The tiring search for stars, directors and financial backers is revealed to us, as well as the sometimes painful, sometimes easy process of creating songs.

We are there when Rex Harrison locks himself up in the dressing room before the opening of "My Fair Lady"; when a very young and virtually unknown Julie Andrews takes her first steps towards stardom; and when Richard Burton provided the strength that enabled a troubled "Camelot" to reach Broadway.

Through Lees, we discover how Lerner and Loewe accidentally met at a restaurant in New York and from then on proceeded to make theatrical history, and never looked back. He reveals to us how the two treated the women in their lives and how Loewe, after being divorced, never remarried and spent the rest of his life in the arms of numerous young women; and how Lerner married eight times and divorced all of his wives except for the last, Liz Robertson.

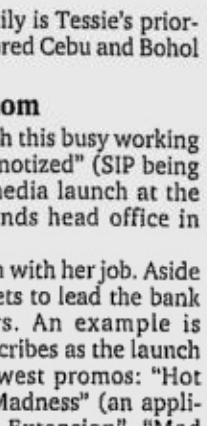
Lerner, the American lyricist, and Loewe, the Austrian composer, "had several things in common," writes Lees.

"Both were small. Lerner used to say of Loewe that he wore lifts in his shoes so high that his ears popped when he took them off at night. Lerner said his own height was five-six-and-a-half, but there is evidence that he was only five-five. Both did some boxing in their youth. Both were habituated Don Juans."

(To be concluded)

Tessie Tan adds travel to her corporate duties

STREET SMART



Mandy Navasero

TESSIE Tan is going places—literally. Her recent promotion as senior vice president for card products for the Bank of the Philippine Islands has added travel to her corporate duties.

Award

As part of her job, she visited Singapore for a meeting with executives of DBS Bank, recently absorbed by BPI, and is slated to hie off to Shanghai, China on March 12 to accept the Gold Medal E-Credit Award for 2001 given by MasterCard International.

Likewise, she has traveled with her children, Kathy and Brian, to places like Phuket, Thailand and Bali, Indonesia. Kathy graduated summa cum laude from Ateneo de Manila University in 1998 and is currently working as a business analyst for McKinsey and Co.

Brian, on the other hand, is a civil engineer who graduated magna cum laude from UP Diliman and will take further studies at Stanford University and UC Berkeley for his M.S. in civil engineering.

Quality time with her family is Tessie's priority. Just recently, Tessie explored Cebu and Bohol with Kathy and Brian.

Working mom

We recently caught up with this busy working mom during BPI Cards' "SIPnotized" (SIP being Special Installment Plan) media launch at the Bank of the Philippine Islands head office in Makati.

Tessie is clearly having fun with her job. Aside from the travel perks, she gets to lead the bank in trail-blazing endeavors. An example is "SIPnotized", which Tan describes as the launch pad for BPI Cards' four newest promos: "Hot Summer Daze Installment Madness" (an appliance fair), "Frequent User Extension", "Mad About Fitness" and "Travel Madness."

She also adds that value is what BPI Card offers best. "The Travel Madness offers our cardholders the most attractive domestic and international travel bargains of the season."

Tourism Usec. Oscar Palabyab was also there during the launch to declare the DOT's full support for Travel Madness.

TOP, Tessie Tan. Above, BPI staff shows latest card promos.

Portraits of Marco Sison and Raymond Bagatsing as Tony Javier

By Rodolfo A.G. Silvestre Jr.

MANIPULATIVE. Charming. Ambitious. These are some of the words Marco Sison and Raymond Bagatsing use to describe Tony Javier, the character they both play alternately in the latest run of Nick Joaquin's "Portrait of the Artist as Filipino," at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

New challenge

Tony Javier, the gigolo who boards with the sisters Paula and Candida Marasigan in the original script, takes on a new challenge since in this Anton Juan-directed version, the spinsters are transformed into aging bachelors who are also closet queens.

Finding out how Marco Sison and Raymond Bagatsing flirt with the Marasigan gentlemen is reason enough to catch the play's final performances today and tomorrow.

Of course, flirting is not new to Marco and Raymond.

Marco is a balladeer whose good looks and deep mellow voice have thrilled women, both young and old, since the late 1970s.

Raymond came into the scene in the early 1990s, equipped not only with a face to die for and a lean, muscular body, but also acting prowess that has gotten him good roles opposite some of the most beautiful women in Philippine movies.

Amazing

But, to play Tony Javier to Anton's Pablito, and Behn's Candido? "This is something else," says Marco. "It's like an educational trip for me," admits Raymond. "It's amazing how Behn and Anton suit their roles. The play was meant for them."

Javier is a role they identify with. "Actually, a part of me is like Tony Javier," says Marco. "A lot of us in show biz are like him. I admit that I have some of his traits. He has an inferiority complex because he is poor, but at the same time he is ambitious. And because of his ambition, he really wants to learn, to be educated.

Manipulative

"And when it came to relating to the opposite sex, he was very manipulative. Once upon a time, I was like that. *Siyempre*, you use whatever plus factors you have to convince the opposite sex."

Although coming from a family that has made a mark in Manila politics, Raymond considers himself a Tony Javier, too. "Let's put it this way: I grew up in Australia where they didn't know about my father's family. So, I was just like everyone else. My mother and I lived a very middle-class life. To this day, I haven't finished college and I still aspire to earn a degree. I've also gone through various stages of rebellion. I've had a lot of emotional turmoil, and like Tony, I blame the world for it.

"But I've also always believed in myself, just like him. At the same time, there were parts of myself that I've always wanted to escape from. So, now, at 30, I am bent on going back to school and taking up political science."

At the same time, they distance themselves from Tony in some ways: "Tony Javier will do just about anything so he can get what he wants," analyzes Marco. "*Ako naman*, I have set rules and standards for myself, so I have limitations. This guy, he will go all the way. He will use his body to get everything he wants."

Raymond begs to differ from Tony in that, "in the play, he lost. And I don't intend to lose in my life."

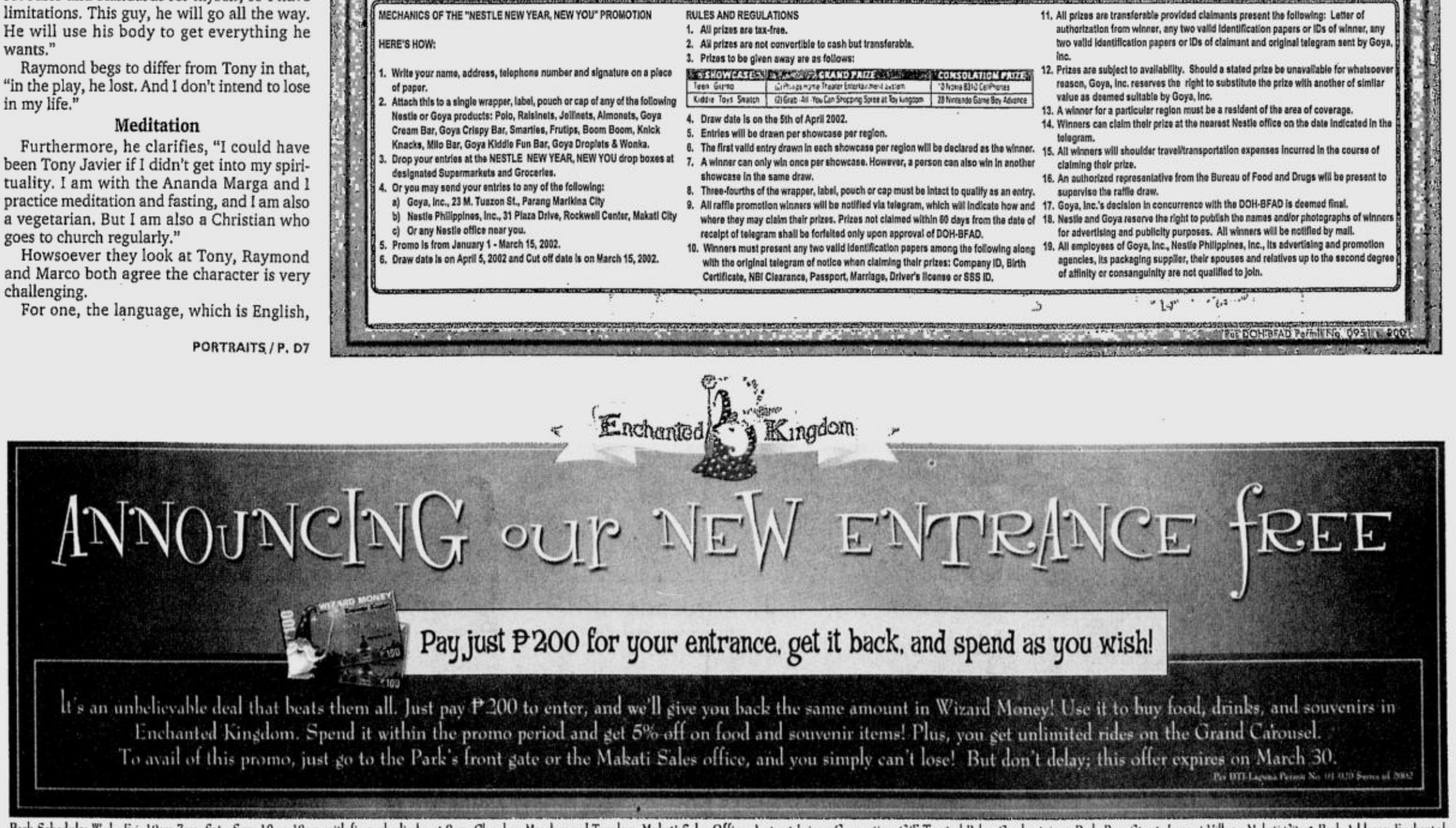
Meditation

Furthermore, he clarifies, "I could have been Tony Javier if I didn't get into my spirituality. I am with the Ananda Marga and I practice meditation and fasting, and I am also a vegetarian. But I am also a Christian who goes to church regularly."

Howsoever they look at Tony, Raymond and Marco both agree the character is very challenging.

For one, the language, which is English,

PORTRAITS / P. D7



MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

ATOMO AND WEBOY

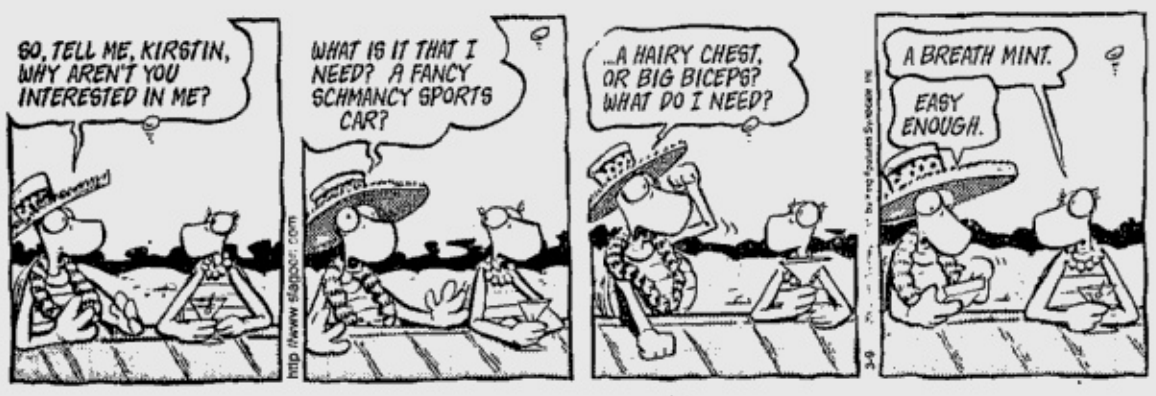
BY LYRA GARCELLANO

PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY



SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL CUISON

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Emmanuel Lewis, Kato Kaelin, Mickey Spillane, Trish Van Devere
Happy Birthday: You will attract dynamic partners this year. Your ability to express yourself will be enhanced. Don't sit back letting others make decisions for you. You will use your knowledge, coupled with enhanced creative talent, to be entertaining. You will be sensitive, intuitive and unusual in your self-expression. Your numbers are 5, 12, 18, 21, 23, 39

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Don't turn your world upside down. If someone interests you but you or this person are already involved with someone else don't think twice: Just back away.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): You will be in a romantic mood today. Let your feelings be known and don't hesitate to plan something special with the one you can't stop thinking about. Nothing will stand in your way.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Open up to the opportunities around you. Changes can take place regarding your position and your ability to make money. Joint ventures may not be in your best interest.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You may need to do some damage control if you and someone you consider to be a partner have not been seeing things in the same way. Get out and visit friends or relatives

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You should do a little research regarding your future prospects. Go to a vocational seminar or check out the Internet for information on careers that interest you.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You can change your image or boost your self-confidence today by picking up information regarding how to better yourself. Physical activities will lead to new friendships and possible romance.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Someone you are close to or live with may disappoint you today. Don't be too quick to judge this person. He or she may not have had a choice.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Whether you travel a distance or just go looking around your neighborhood there is plenty of interesting information to be found. You may be able to help someone you care about just by listening

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You will have lots of good ideas for ways to up your income. You will be in the mood to enjoy what you acquire so expect to get out and do a little spending. This is not the best time to lend money

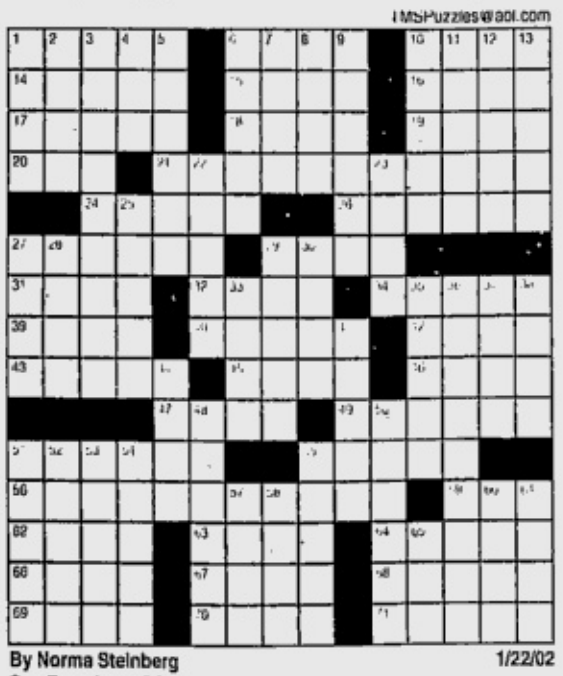
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You'll be uncertain about what you want at an emotional level. Don't let anyone back you into a corner. If you aren't ready to make up your mind about something don't. Time is on your side.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You'll be looking for adventure today. Don't get enticed into secret activities that may not be in your best interest. New friendships are likely to unfold if you attend a lecture that interests you.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): The focus may be on a younger person in your life. Do your best to help him or her sort through any troubles. Your support and guidance will be appreciated.

Birthday Baby: You will make new friends wherever you go. You can move from one group of friends to another. Change is always welcomed for the adventure it provides.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Norma Steinberg
San Francisco, CA

1/22/02

ACROSS
1 "The __ of Wakefield"
6 That woman's
10 Rip off
14 Sun-dried brick
15 Spoken
16 Battle of Olympic volleyball
17 Free-for-all
18 Dimensions
19 Pig or cast follower
20 Mouse surface
21 Still in a movie
24 Doctrine
26 Distant prospects
27 Parts of a flight
29 Joan of "The Last Emperor"
31 Tim of "The Treasure of the Sierra Madre"
32 Bangkok native
34 Sword choice
39 Competent
40 Suffice
42 Molten rock
43 Disorderly
45 Author Haley
46 "New Jack City" co-star
47 French airport
49 __ pink (delight)
51 Golden years
55 Propounded
56 Lawrence Kasdan film
59 Rhythmic patter
62 Mexican menu item
63 Turkey's neighbor
64 Iowa commune
66 Son of Isaac
67 Displace
68 Peachy keen!
69 Diving platform
70 Female sheep
71 Calendar units

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1 Improvise on the piano
2 New thought
3 Sales ventures
4 Actor Vigoda
5 Sailor's jacket
6 Watered, as a lawn
7 Border lake
8 Tease
9 Record holder
10 Leaves bed
11 Gem weight
12 Bakery enticement
13 Horses' dos
22 Takes a break
23 $5 bills
25 Sacred ceremonies
27 Fake
28 One of Hamlet's options
29 "You're So Vain" singer Simon
30 Abuzz abode
33 Get better
35 Stein's Toklas
36 Scott Glenn movie
37 Mr. Knievel
38 Cost per unit
41 Glorify
44 Yankee Berra
48 Government in power
50 Isolated kitchen counter
51 Playful aquatic mammal
52 Location of the Potala
53 Low-boost coffee?
54 In the vicinity
55 Evergreens
57 Boast
58 Be down with
60 First of the pot
61 Satisfies a debt
65 Lost Gl

PREVIOUS PUZZLE ANSWER

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1/22/02

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL

KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA

LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

Madonna set to star in West End play

LONDON—Pop icon Madonna is set to star in a new play opening in London's West End theaterland in May, a spokeswoman for the original material girl said on Thursday.

Ambitious art dealer

Art world satire "Up for Grabs" centers around an ambitious art dealer who risks everything to get ahead. It will premiere in Britain at London's Wyndham's Theater on May 23 with previews from May 9.

"Madonna's really looking forward to appearing in the West End," the spokeswoman told Reuters. "She read the script and just loved the play."

Madonna married English film director Guy Ritchie, with whom she has a son, in December 2000. She has since made London her home.

"Up for Grabs" was written by leading Australian playwright David Williamson and broke all records when it opened in Sydney in February 2001.

It will be directed by Laurence Boswell, who recently won acclaim for his direction of "A Day in the Death of Joe Egg" and Ben Elton's "Popcorn."

Mother-of-two Madonna last appeared on the stage in 1988 when she played a secretary in American playwright David Mamet's satire on Hollywood, "Speed the Plow."

Fringe production

She also starred off-Broadway in a fringe production of David Raab's "Goose and Tom Tom" with her then-husband Hollywood actor Sean Penn in 1986.

MADONNA. Last appeared in a play in 1988.

However, although a undisputed pop superstar, whose "Drowned World" tour last year sold out within hours of tickets going on sale, the 43-year-old has had a mixed acting career.

She had early success with indie film "Desperately Seeking Susan" in 1985 and won a Golden Globe award for her portrayal of Eva Peron in the 1996 film of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Evita."

But films "Shanghai Surprise" in 1986, "Who's that Girl" in 1987 and "The Next Best Thing" in 2000 were critical and box-office flops.

Responding to the news of Madonna's latest acting foray, "Up for Grabs" co-producer Sonia Friedman said:

"We are thrilled to be bringing Madonna to the West End stage for the first time in such an exciting and acclaimed play." ***Reuters***

SISON AND BAGATSING. Flirting is not new to them.

Portraits of . . .

(From page D5)

presents Marco with some difficulty, as he tries to improve on his enunciation. And, of course, the daily rehearsals can be taxing, while "as a singer, a maximum of four rehearsals with the band is sufficient."

Essence

As for Raymond, it is the essence of Tony that can be a problem. "He is very manipulative, at the same time charming. If you can't say the lines charmingly enough, that's a problem already. And you can't be overacting, neither underacting. So, you have to be just like Tony Javier, whose emotions can run from high to low and back to high again. How do you make sure your audience can feel that"?

Still, getting into this specific role has its less difficult aspects. That he has "something of Tony" in himself makes things easier for Marco. "All I need to do is tap into that part of me. And, of course, the lines show exactly how one can be Tony."

In the same manner, Raymond says, "I just have to program my mind that I am basically Tony. I just have to get used to his way of speaking, but in the sense that we're very intense about life, *pareho lang kami*."

As for the parts with sexual undertones, Marco clarifies, "It's blocked in good taste *naman*. Especially the seduction scene."

With a grin, Raymond says, "I just do it like I'm doing it with an older female, I mean that female side of Candido and Pablito."

Husband

In the musical "Katy," about the singer Katy de la Cruz, Marco played the role of her husband, another womanizer.

Marco stresses that his doors are open as far as acting is concerned. At the same time, he wonders if it should take another gold album like his "My Love Will See You Through" to get producers talk to him about doing a movie version of the song.

Raymond, on the other hand, would like to do "Hamlet."

For now, it is Tony Javier they have to grapple with. And it is a role that has made them look beyond the character, and even beyond themselves.

"'Portrait' is actually a very political script," says Raymond. "The Philippine situation is all there. In the play, the poet turned senator says, 'Ssometimes, you have to move on in your life. You have to be realistic and not get stuck."

Marco sums it up when he says, "There will always be people in this world who will think and act like Tony Javier. He is a user and there will always be users.

"But then, the roles of Pablito and Candido will also always be there. Some people will continue to be abused and to be used. In the end, it is up to the person to decide which role he would like to play in his life."

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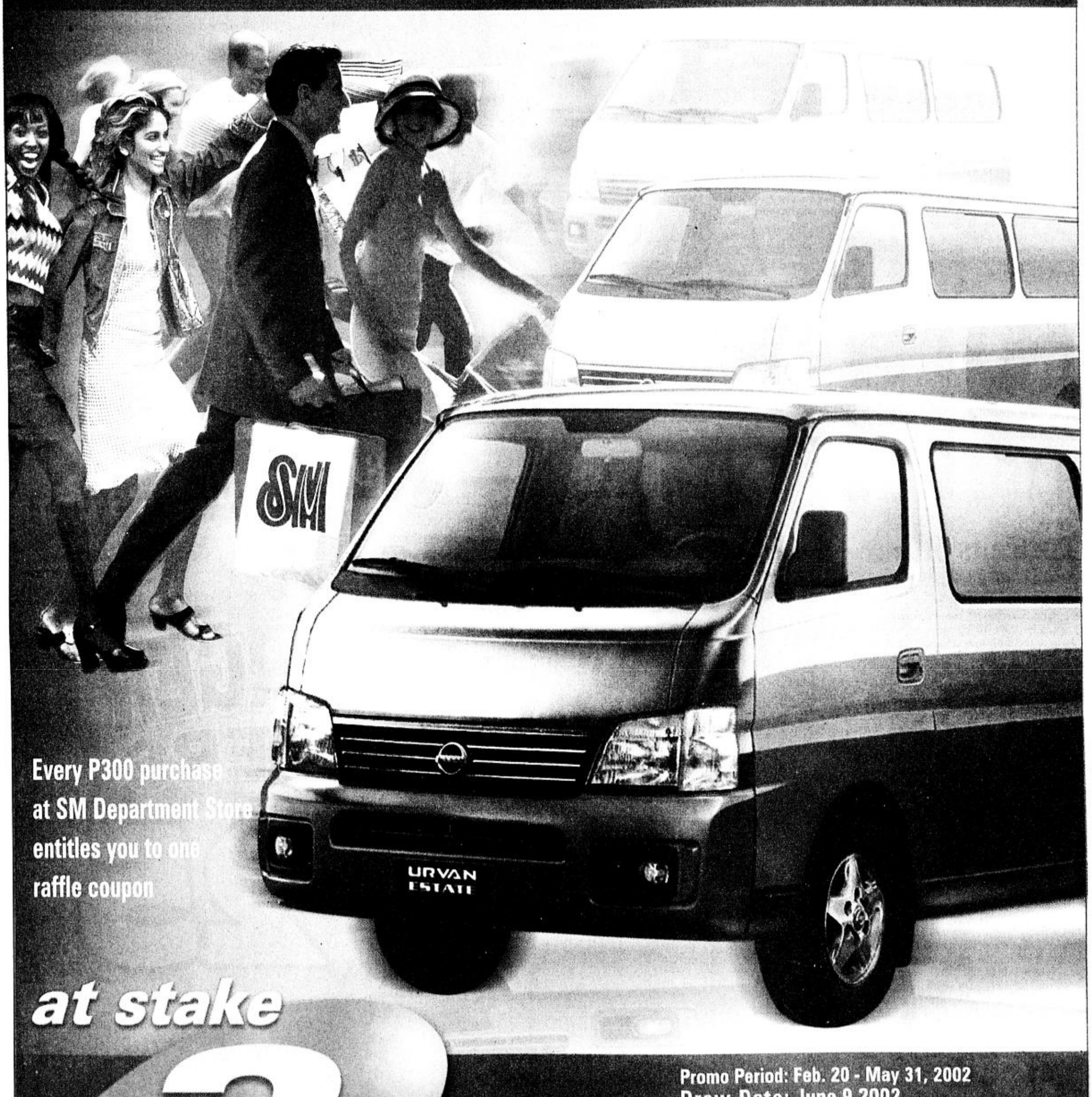

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SATURDAY Special

For Willis, variety is the spice of life

By Douglas J. Rowe

NEW YORK—"How many times can you run down a street with a gun in your hand, screaming 'NOOOO'?"

For Bruce Willis, that's merely a rhetorical question he poses over a light dinner between taping a "Charlie Rose" interview and a gig with his band.

Boring

It gets boring, he says, explaining why he hasn't yippee-ki-yayed his way through a "Die Hard" movie since 1995.

Sure, the 46-year-old movie star did the sci-fi action film "The Fifth Element" and wore the hero's mantle in the blockbuster "Armageddon" in the last seven years. But for the most part, he has found varied roles in comedies, dramas and, of course, the supernatural megahit "The Sixth Sense."

Willis, who first gained notice with his Emmy-winning turn as a wisecracking roue in "Moonlighting" (1985-89), has even done guest appearances on "Friends," winning a second Emmy two years ago.

"I'm lucky. I've had a little success in other genres," he says. "Because that really determines how versatile you get to be. You're not going to be invited back to do other comedies if you don't do one that makes some dough. It is a business. Hollywood's not just everybody out there going, 'Let's get together and make a movie.' It's a big business."

Versatility

Willis, who's gone from a working-class South Jersey upbringing to paychecks upwards of $20 million, maintains he isn't straining to display his versatility, however.

"I would get asked back if I just did 'Die Hard 9'," he says, lightly chortling. "As long as it made money, the studios would ask me back. I'm just trying to keep myself interested, so I don't get bored—that's why I seek out things that are different each time."

His latest film, "Hart's War," co-starring Colin Farrell, features Willis as the highest-ranking officer at a German POW camp during World War II. The film combines elements of "Stalag 17," "The Bridge on the River Kwai" and "The Great Escape," and melds a little of the characters played by William Holden, Alec Guinness and Steve McQueen in those respective movies into Willis' Col. William McNamara.

Willis took the part because "it's not clear what kind of guy he is—whether he's a good guy or mendacious."

Plus, it was a World War II movie and "had all that escape stuff," and he's a fan of both.

"It just seemed like a fun thing to do. I'm at a point in my work now where that's as much of a criterion as anything else is," he says.

Co-producer

David Ladd, a co-producer of "Hart's War," felt Willis had the right bearing and age to play the fourth-generation West Point officer. "Bruce IS a colonel," he says, laughing, in a telephone interview from Vancouver, British Columbia, the location of his next movie.

If you saw Willis' last movie, "Bandits," and then "Hart's War," Ladd says, you'd have to wonder: Is that the same actor?

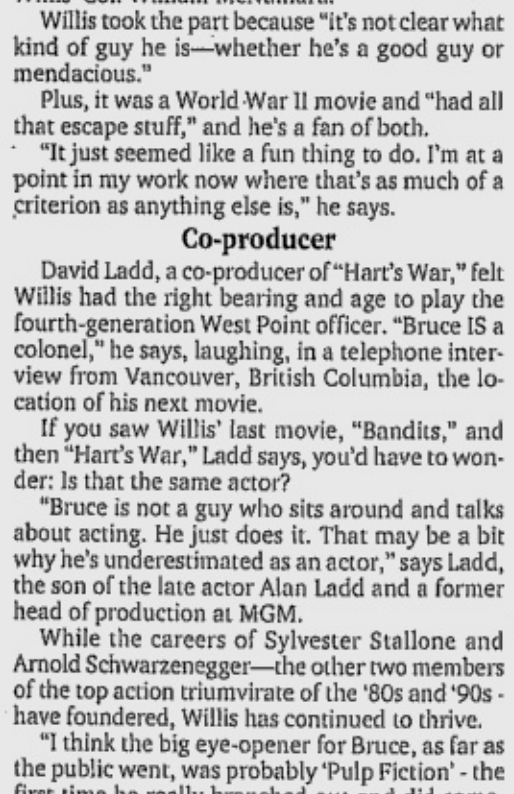
"Bruce is not a guy who sits around and talks about acting. He just does it. That may be a bit why he's underestimated as an actor," says Ladd, the son of the late actor Alan Ladd and a former head of production at MGM.

While the careers of Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger—the other two members of the top action triumvirate of the '80s and '90s - have foundered, Willis has continued to thrive.

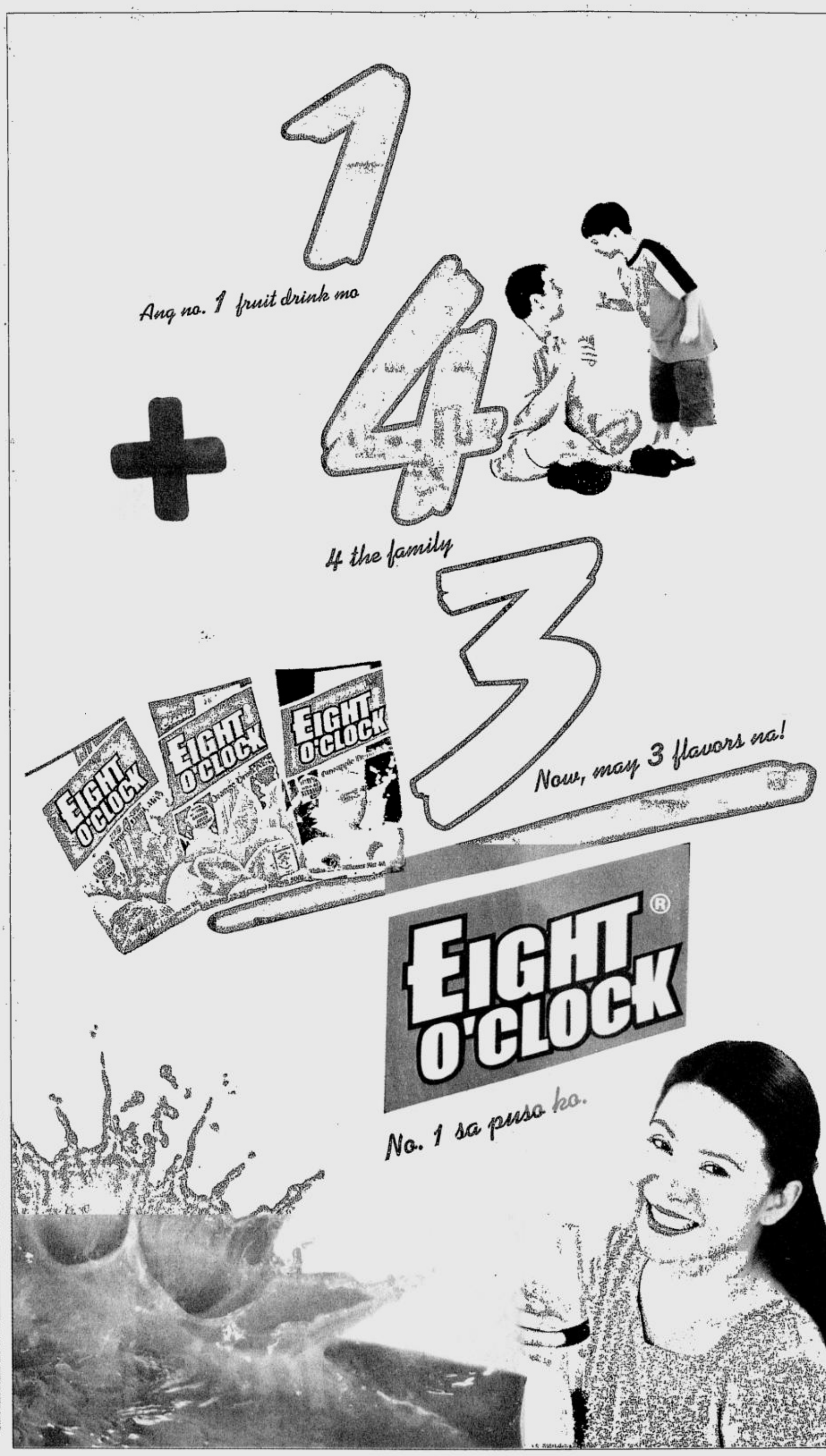
"I think the big eye-opener for Bruce, as far as the public went, was probably 'Pulp Fiction' - the first time he really branched out and did something different" that was very successful, Ladd says.

Willis' other meatier parts include a disillusioned Vietnam vet in 1989's "In Country," a cheating husband opposite Paul Newman in "Nobody's Fool" and a time-traveling loner in Terry Gilliam's "12 Monkeys."

FOR/ p.E2



WILLIS. Underestimated as an actor.



'Cirque' vivifies devotion to 'nonchalant' perfection

By Nestor U. Torre

PEOPLE who've seen "Cirque" at the Araneta Coliseum (only until March 10) agree that it's the most exciting show in town. On my part, it brought back vivid memories of the incredible feats of acrobatic prowess that I witnessed in 1986 when I was part of the cast and staff of Eddie Romero's "King and Emperor," which was filmed throughout the People's Republic of China.

Acrobatic exhibitions

When I wasn't working on the film, I would make it a point to watch all sorts of shows, and the best by far were the acrobatic exhibitions that were held all over China, in big cities and small towns alike.

I marvelled at the seemingly impossible acrobatic marvels that I saw—boys balancing on many chairs stacked one on top of another, a man juggling many plates at the same time while walking across a high wire, a young girl standing tiptoe on the sharp side of a sword, women being hurled through the air and "flying" with blithe abandon, etc.

Distilled

Some of these feats are showcased in "Cirque" (indeed, some of its cast members are Chinese), but they have been distilled, focused and highlighted to such a fine pitch that they come off as much more than simple feats of physical strength and dexterity, and have become genuinely artistic—with the marvelous human body as medium.

Still, the artistic end product is made possible by the centuries-long tradition of Chinese acrobatics, martial arts and theater. Performers in China are capable of "contradicting" the laws of nature because of that tradition, which succeeding generations have spent their lives to nurture and further refine.

TWO acrobats spin around in their special contraption.

Training

True to that tradition, Chinese acrobats start their training when they're very small children, when their skeletal hinges are pliant enough to bend and contort in "impossible" ways, and their young muscles can be developed along rigorously purposive lines. This gets them ready for the amazing feats of strength and dexterity that Chinese performers are famous for.

Success in this extremely demanding field is achieved only after the young student gives it everything he's got, and more. Pain is a given, and injury is an everyday possibility. But the student-acolytes' focus remains the same: to hone their bodies to such perfection that they can execute the tradition's most difficult challenges—with seeming nonchalance

"CIRQUE." Most exciting show in town.

True art

To be sure, most of the performers in "Cirque" aren't Asian, but they vivify the same devotion to "nonchalant" perfection. If true art hides itself, then this physical artistry of the highest order.

The sad thing is that local audiences have been slow in realizing the presence of this marvel in their midst. Let's hope that, before the show's limited run comes to a close, more people shall have had the good fortune of watching it, so that they too can thrill to this memorable display of human physical beauty and strength at their best.

Whatever happened to 'Banig' Roberto?

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

BOY bands are a dime a dozen. Sometimes it is hard to set one apart from the rest. You can pretty much tell how good or bad they sound when you catch them singing live in those generic awards shows and on television.

The British boy band, A1, is acknowledged to have some of the stronger musicians in boy band universe.

Former child singing sensation Josephine "Banig" Roberto, who got her monicker from the late Bert "Tawa" Marcelo because she used to wet her *banig* as a toddler, is still finding her place in the entertainment sun abroad, but she can certainly sing circles around even the best of these boy bands.

Write us: Philippine Daily Inquirer, Saturday Special section, Show Biz Q&A, Chino Roces ave. (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo sts., Makati City.

This week's Q and A:

"I love Ricky Martin, Tom Cruise and A1. Can you feature my favorite pop group? What are they up to?"—*Mary Christine Bench Llamado, San Pedro, Laguna.*

When we checked out local record outlets recently, we learned that British boy band A1's third album, "Caught in the Middle," has already been released here.

Their official website reports that the boys, made up of "soul A1" Ben Adams (5'10", brown hair, blue eyes, born Nov. 22,1981); "rock A1" Christian Ingebrigtsen (5'11", blond hair, green eyes, born Jan. 25, 1977); "pop A1" Mark Read (6', brown hair, blue eyes, born Nov. 7, 1978) and "funk A1" Paul Marazzi (5'5", brown hair, green eyes, born Jan. 24, 1975), just got back from a visit to Scandinavia (Finland, Norway, Sweden), where they shot a video in Helsinki and visited bars in Oslo. Christian was a judge in the Norwegian Children's Eurovision Song Festival.

A1 uses the formulaic combination of dashing good looks and songs of heartbreak and young love. Their debut album, 1999's "Here We Come," established them as strong musicians with a flair for electronica and an intelligible talent for writing their own material and playing their own songs, a boy "band" in the truest sense of the word.

They joined the big leagues when their first single, "Be the First to Believe," hit the sixth spot on the UK chart. "The A-1 List" (2000) proved to be even more successful when they reworked A-ha's 1985 cult classic, "Take On Me," which became their first No. 1 song.

Trivia: Ben left school at 16 with seven A's and three B's. He plays violin and oboe, and has recorded two classical CDs as head chorister of St. Margaret's Westminster Abbey.

Christian plays the piano and guitar, has attended Paul McCartney's school, LIPA, and has acted in musicals. His father, Stein, was a Norwegian pop star in the '70s.

Mark has been singing and playing the piano since age three, and represented England in a song festival in Romania.

Paul is the only one who can't play an instrument. He loves, hold your breath, *pigs*!

"Whatever happened to Josephine "Banig" Roberto after her inspiring triumph in Ed McMahon's 'Star Search' in the US?"—*Nino Maglaya, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.*

Josephine "Banig" Roberto, who rose to fame in Manila when she became champion of "Bagong Kampeon" for seven consecutive weeks and soon after charmed audiences (and her directors) with her spitfire vocal bravado in concerts and stage musicals like "Katyl," emerged as Grand Champion of the International Star Search in California in 1989, beating the likes of Ecuadorean, now US pop star, Christina Aguilera and LeAnn Rimes along the way.

(In an MTV chat in mid-1999, Aguilera, when asked of her loss to Banig, allegedly said that competing against someone of Banig's age was "not fair." She is five years older.)

Soon after, she guested in popular talk shows, like Arsenio

WHATEVER/ p.E3

A1. Flair for electronica.

For Willis variety . . .

From page E1

Over dinner, the rail-thin Willis, his head shaved, is hoarse, subdued and thoughtful. He runs a gamut of topics as varied as his recent roles: Sept. 11, his formerly tumultuous relationship with the media, actors who take themselves too seriously, the latest book he's reading, his own mortality—and starting a record label.

Well-timed release

Willis says the release of "Hart's War" is "coincidentally well-timed." They shot the film last year and had no idea it would be released on a wave of patriotism after the terrorist attacks against the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

He doesn't pay much attention to the news day to day, but "those images are still scorched into my mind."

It's been a long time since he railed against the media, he says, explaining that he stopped once he figured out "how it works."

"I don't hate the press at all. I just don't pay much attention to 'em," says Willis, who along with ex-wife Demi Moore was once a favorite tabloid target.

"My big thing is just to try not to take what I do for a living that seriously," he says, adding that he knows actors who do. "It's a good job."

While he takes "the actual nuts and bolts of my job" seriously, he jokes that anthropologists 10,000 years in the future will look at films and say: "Boy, they were pretty impressed with themselves back in the late 20th century."

Thinking of the future also makes him think of the past and his current reading material—"Warriors of God: Richard the Lionheart and Saladin in the Third Crusade," by James Reston Jr.

Willis works only about five to six months a year now, taking the rest of the time off to "hang out with my kids. I enjoy taking time off as much as I do working."

He remains cordial with Moore and sees a lot of their three daughters—Rumer, 13, Scout, 10, Tallulah, 8.

Mortality

Willis, who once had a reputation as a party-hearty guy, says he never paid attention to his own mortality until he had kids. "Even if you live to be 80 years old, it still goes by real quick. I've been aware of how quick life goes by for a long time, and how easily it can be taken away," says Willis, whose brother, Robert, died of cancer last June.

With dinner, Willis drinks nothing harder than Evian and a cappuccino, and he doesn't even finish his food. Before long, he has to rush to a concert by Ivan Neville, the one act signed to his new record label, Uptop.

Willis—who had a hit with "Respect Yourself" from his album and the US HBO cable TV special "The Return of Bruno" in 1987—has been on the road for a while, promoting Neville and performing with his own band, the Accelerators.

"I think I'm never in any danger of being accused of being a singer. But it's fun," he says. "It's a good hobby." ***AP***

Whatever

From page E2

Hall's, and released (on a limited scale) an extended-play album in 1994 from Del-Fi Records, "Can You Feel My Heart?," containing six tracks.

Unfortunately, it didn't sell well (although it landed on the 8th top-sellers' spot in Virgin Records' charts, similar to the chart listing of Powerbooks' M1 record outlets) because it wasn't full-length and, apparently, because there was no full company support when a misunderstanding arose between her (supposedly overprotective) father and her American manager, Bob Keane.

Her sitcom contracts with 20th Century Fox and Motown Productions didn't pan out. It was also reported that she turned down an offer to headline a House of Blues show, allegedly run by Babyface's La Face Records group.

She announced last year that her next album was set for release around October but this has obviously been moved. On her website, she asks visitors if she should just drop "*Banig*" and use her real name, "Josephine," instead. Last thing we heard, she performed at the Phil. Independence Expo last June 16 and 17 at the L.A. Convention Center. We hope that she joins Christina Aguilera on the Billboard charts soon!

ROBERTO. Row with US manager.

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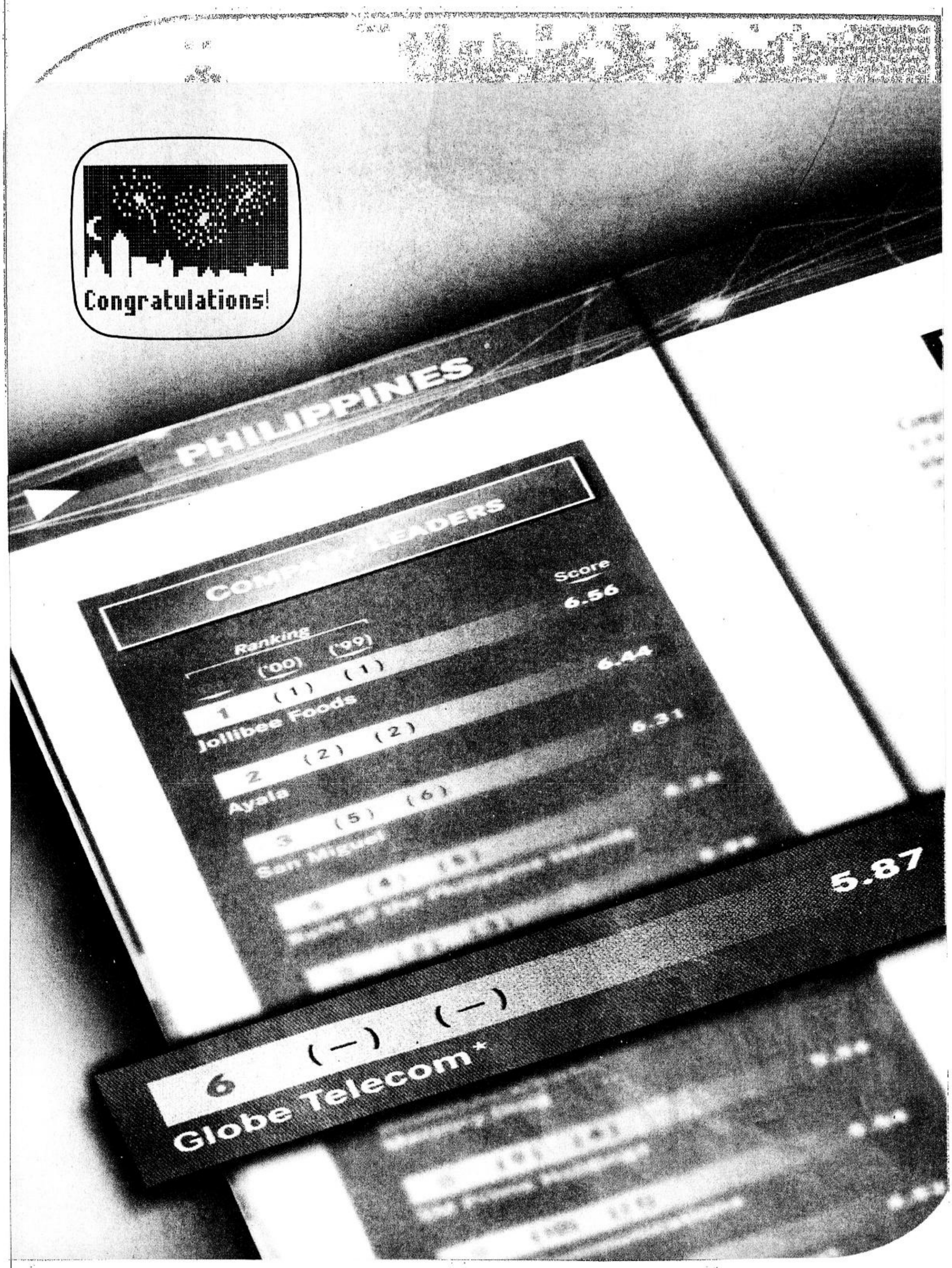

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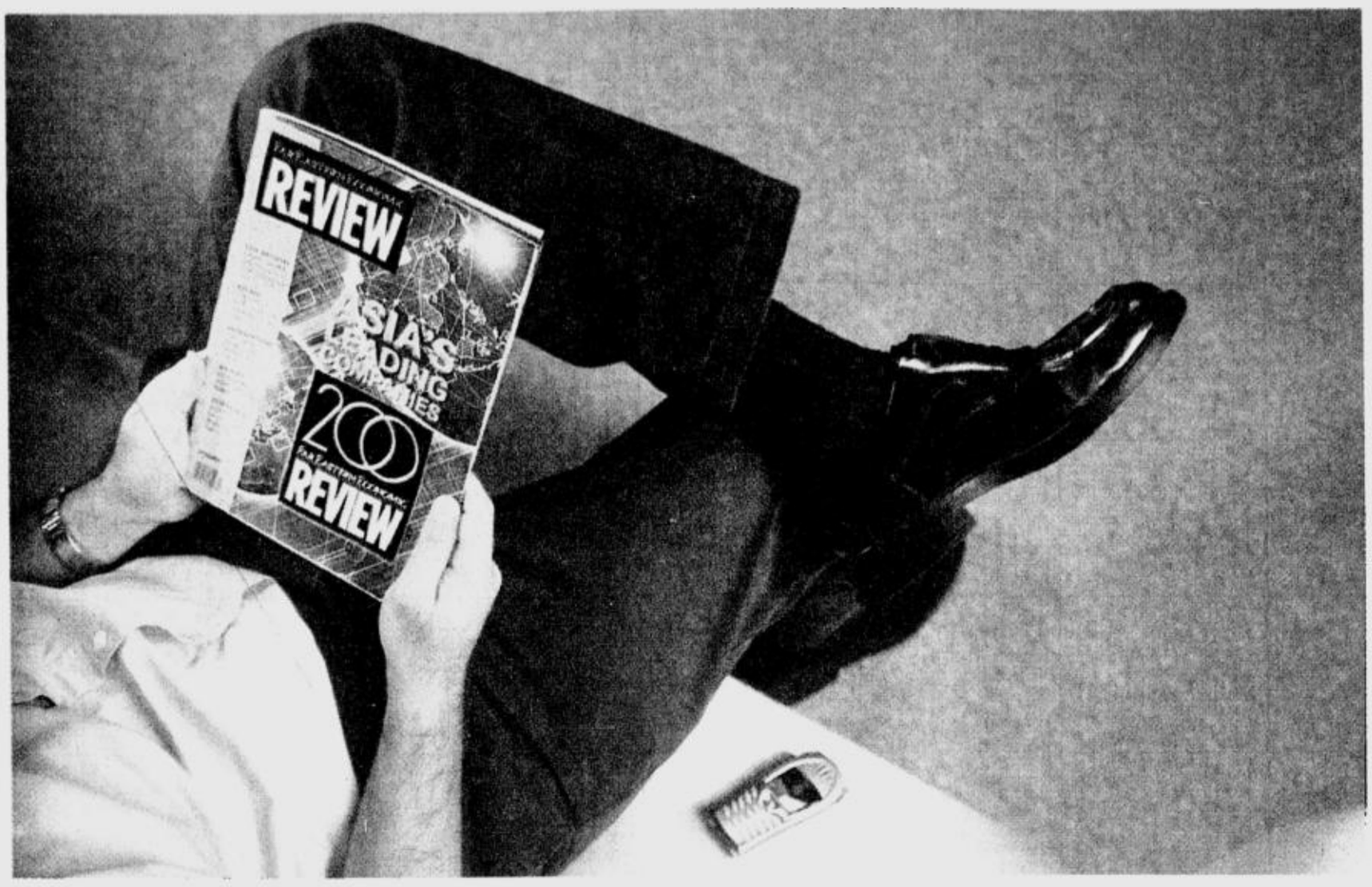

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	5:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 7:00 Arriba, Arriba 8:00 Mary D' Potter 9:00 Da Pilya en Da Pilot 10:00 Kakasa Ka Ba? 10:30 Sapul Kayo Dyan 11:00 "F" 11:30 Sports Unlimited	6:00 Final Drive 6:30 Auto Review 7:00 Barcelona Battle of the Gold Medalists 9:00 Fox News 10:00 The Working President 11:00 Auto Focus 12:00 Fox News	6:30 Wing Commander 7:00 Sailormoon Super S 7:30 Wheel of Fortune 8:00 Celebrity Family Feud 8:30 Wow Mali! 9:30 Saturday Night Specials *St. Paul (Part 2)*	5:30 Pokémon 6:00 Imbestigador 7:00 Idol Ko Si Kap 8:00 Kakabakaba 9:00 Pinoy Blockbuster 11:00 Master Showman Presents	6:00 Star Trek 7:00 Special Unit II 8:00 Strange World 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse *18th Star Awards* 11:00 PGMA	4:00 PBA Game 1 6:00 PBA Game 2 8:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:00 Viva Box Office 11:00 IBC Elorde	6:00 Digital Tour 6:30 G2 Living 7:00 Explorer 7:30 Early Edition 8:30 Gilmore Girls 9:30 Studio 23 Presents 12:00 MYX Sampler	3:00 Q Show Case 7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras ng Katotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! Coming Attractions 7:00 Celebrity Profile 8:00 TV Women 9:00 E! Special *Monica Lewinsky: The Untold Story* 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Uncut *Diane Keaton*
	5:30 Sharon 7:00 Digimon 7:30 Wansapanataym 9:00 Home Along Da Riles 9:30 ABS-CBN Presents 11:30 Off The Record 12:00 The Weekend News	6:00 Fox News 8:00 Street Legal 9:00 NBA 11:00 Business & Leisure 12:00 Fox News	6:00 Zorro 6:30 Guyferd 7:00 Price is Right 8:00 Sing-Galing 9:00 The Big Night *Golden Globe Awards 2002 (Part 1)* 11:00 Star Trek	5:30 Partners Mel and Jay 7:00 KI 8:00 Daddy Di Do Du 9:00 Sunday Night Box Office 11:00 Che-Che Lazaro Presents	6:00 Entertainment This Weekend 7:00 Ripley's Believe It or Not 8:00 Match TV 9:00 Sunday's Big Event *Joan of Arc (Part 2)* 11:00 The Magical Cebu	4:00 PBA Game 1 6:00 PBA Game 2 6:00 Who Wants To Be A Millionaire? 9:00 Sinemaks 11:30 El Shaddai	6:00 Starship Troopers 6:30 Rugrats 7:00 Batman Beyond 7:30 Futurama 8:00 Bette 8:30 Veronica's Closet 9:00 Will & Grace 9:30 Murder in Small town X 10:30 Twilight Zone 11:00 News Central	5:00 Quartermaster Window Shop 7:00 Sunday Mini-Series 8:00 Oh Tokyo 9:00 Sunday Night Movies 11:00 Bikini Open	6:00 CBS Evening News 6:30 E! Coming Attractions 7:00 Moulin Rouge 7:30 Nicole Kidman 8:00 Movie Women 9:00 E! Special *Golden Globe Fashion Police* 10:00 FYE! Ford Model Search
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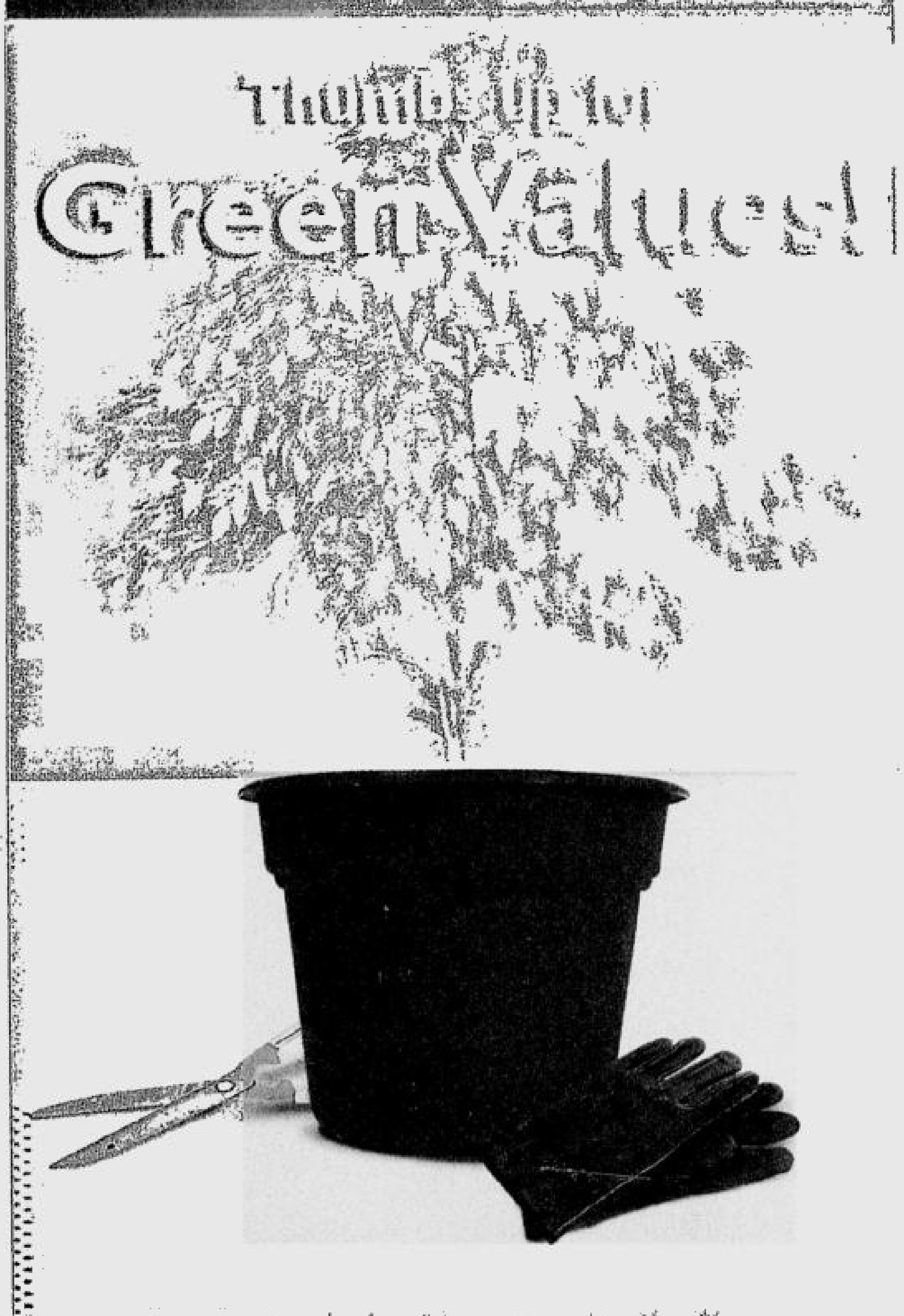
MARCH 4-11



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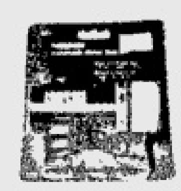
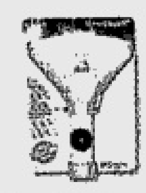
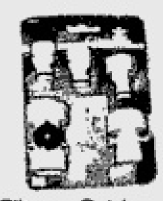


Nelson Automatic Water Shut-off **P 710.78**



Greenthumb Fan Spray **P 159.98**

Greenthumb Twin Circular Pattern Sprinkler **P 238.28**



Gilmour Quick Connect Starter Set **P 380.48**

Snap-Cut Edge Shear **P 1,759.28**

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SWITCHING CHANNELS

ABS-CBN launches another macho group in 'Klasmeyts'

By Edmund L. Sicam

THE TESTOSTERONE level at ABS-CBN went up another notch after its latest macho group debuted last Wednesday at 9:30 p.m. in a sexually-charged gag show, "Klasmeyts."

The group is made up of Herbert Bautista, Bayani Agbayani, Paolo Contis, Michael Rivera and Keempee de Leon. The network is also home to The Hunks (Piolo Pascual, Jericho Rosales, Bernard Palanca, Diether Ocampo, Carlos Agassi) and Whattamen (Rico Yan, Dominic Ochoa, Marvin Agustin).

There are no female co-stars on "Klasmeyts" but there are enough shapely bodies on the gag show to satisfy male viewers. This is not to say that the show has nothing but sexy sights to offer.

On its initial telecast, there was a spoof of a scene from "Anak" where a clip from the movie was shown with an altered soundtrack. Instead of mother and daughter arguing over domestic problems, Vilma Santos and Claudine Barretto fight over who is the better Darna.

The new comedy show was "Xed" by the MTRCB on first review for sexually-suggestive scenes. The reviewers found segments featuring scantily-clad "Baywatch"-type babes rubbing themselves against the hosts and Keempee de Leon making a suggestive gesture too sexy for TV's young viewers.

The pilot show was eventually approved by a five-man committee on second review after the "offensive" portions were edited out.

However, many of the double-meaning jokes and an interview with a bikini-clad Rica Peralejo were retained. The approval came just hours before the scheduled telecast.

Asked how different his group is from The Hunks and Whattamen, Herbert replied, "They're definitely handsomer compared to Bayani and myself."

In contrast to other comedy shows, much of "Klasmeyts" will be taped before a live audience so the laughter is real, not canned. Taping the show will allow the staff to edit out portions that may create problems with the MTRCB.

The chances of the hosts going overboard are quite high. Although there is a script, the format allows them to make spontaneous comments.

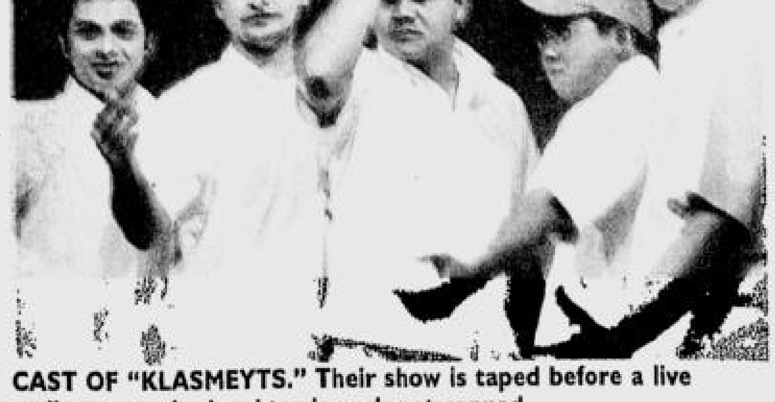
We asked Herbert whether the show would create image problems for him, since he is Quezon City's vice mayor. He said that his participation in the show would eventually be limited to interviews with celebrities and the opening number.

If the segment with Rica Peralejo is indicative of future interviews, Herbert may not get rid of that image problem. Not when his co-host Bayani Agbayani asks Rica questions like "What do you wear to bed?" and "What do you soap first when you take a bath?"

The show is directed by Johnny Manahan so that tells you how important the network considers "Klasmeyts."

Also, it was initially planned as a half-hour show but the network must have found the show good

ABS-CBN/ P. E7



CAST OF "KLASMEYTS." Their show is taped before a live audience, so the laughter is real, not canned.

Make way for Diana Zubiri, Seiko Films' latest nymphet

By Andy Bais

FOUR years ago, Diana Zubiri was one of hundreds of aspirants who trooped to ABS-CBN to audition for the network's Star Circle search. She felt that her beautiful face and body "to die for" were more than enough to be in the enviable company of the likes of Kristine Hermosa.

Rejection

She recalls that the now popular teen star, Alessandra de Rossi, was a co-aspirant. Unfortunately, both of them were rejected. But the rejection did not dampen her spirit. She then tried to join the search for Ms Calendar Girl—this time around, she was the one who backed out.

The reason: she couldn't imagine herself being seen on national television in a revealing swimsuit.

Today, however, is a different story altogether. She is the latest important star of Seiko Films, known for its sex-oriented flicks. Diana topbills "Itlog," the studio's latest offering. Needless to say, she will be doing the regulation intimate and daring scenes with her leading men without her clothes on. What prompted her to dare to bare?

"*Kasi, yung* offer *ng* Seiko Films was a golden opportunity that I must never miss. *Pangarap ko kasi talagang maging artista at makakatulong sa pamilya ko,*" Diana reasons out.

Cross

The 18-year-old boldie, who is a cross between Ina Raymundo and Sharmaine Arnaiz, doesn't hide the fact that she is an illegitimate child. She and another sister are "products" of her then single mom's previous relationship. They are now staying with her mother, who has since gotten married and has children with her present husband.

She reveals that her mom is a housewife and her stepfather is the sole breadwinner. Sadly, her relationship with her stepfather is a troubled one.

"*Madalas, kaming dalawang magkakapatid ang dahilan ng pag-aaway ng* mommy *at* stepfather *ko. Ang usapan daw kasi, hindi kami kasama sa kanila. Pampadagdag nga naman kami sa gastos.* This is why *pinasok ko 'tong* career *na ito para maski papaano, makakatulong sa* finances *namin,*" she shares.

Diana's love for acting was apparent while she was still a child: "*Yung mga bote ng* alcohol, *ginagawa kong kunwari, mag-asawa; pinapagalaw ko sila at may* speaking lines *pa! Mahilig din akong humarap sa salamin at aarte ako; tinitingnan ko yung mukha ko at iiyak,*" she recalls.

Forgettable roles

"Itlog" isn't really her first movie. She has already appeared in several films but she says that her roles in them were very forgettable.

"Actually, extra *lang ako, yun bang dinadaanan lang ng* camera, sometimes *likod ko lang ang nakikita at kapag minalas pa, na-*e edit-out *sa* final print," she wryly says.

Diana confesses that her entry into the bold film scene came as no surprise to her. "*Sa* school *kasi noon, tuwing naglalakad ako sa harap ng mga* guys, *lagi nila akong pinipituhan.* So, I had an inkling *na,* if ever *maging artista ako, sa* sexy roles *ako babagsak,*" she giggles.

Her launching movie was shot in a month's time and she had a grand time. "*Mababait kasi ang lahat ng mga kasama ko. At gusto ko yung* special attention *na binibigay nila sa akin.* First time *ko kasing na-*experience *yun,* unlike *noong pa-*extra-extra *lang ako,*" she gushes.

In her launching movie, Diana plays an obedient daughter who is forced by her father to marry an old and impotent man (Celso Ad. Castillo) to pay for the family's debt.

How was it doing the movie? "*Pinaghalong hirap at sarap! Mahirap, dahil may mga eksena sa movie na talagang mahirap gawin.* Like, *may* love scene *kami ni* Winston Elizalde *na nakapatong kami sa* dolly cart. So, *habang sinu-*shoot *namin yun, tinutulak kami. Kaya lang, na* out-of-balance *kami at nahulog.* Five hours *naming ginawa yung* scene *na yun!*

Dream

"*Masarap naman,* in the sense *na,* finally, *natupad na rin ang* dream *ko na maging bida sa pelikula,*" she smiles.

The list of sexy stars in the local movie industry seems endless. What is Diana Zubiri's edge over the rest?

"*Ang mukha ko. Yun kasing iba retokado na, ang sa akin, orig lahat!* Sweet and demure *din ang dating ko,*" she gamely states.

This early, Diana has already realized that being an actress, a sexy star at that, is no bed of roses.

"*Alam ko,* a lot of people look down on sexy stars. *Pero di nila alam, maski papaano, sinisikap din naming paghusayin ang aming pag-arte at hindi basta na lang naghuhubad. Nasa istorya naman talaga yun.*

"To console myself, *ini-isip ko na lang na dito rin sa pagbo-*bold *nag-*start *sina* Rossana Roces *at* Jaclyn Jose. Who knows, *magiging isang* competent and effective actress *din ako na katulad nila* in the near future," Diana lightens up.

Seiko Films producer Robbie Tan couldn't agree more. He sees a bright future for his latest discovery.

That was why he made sure that Diana's launching movie, which will open this month, was handled by competent people in the local film industry.

Robbie hired the services of veteran Francis "Jun" Posadas as director; award-winning scriptwriter Gerry Gracio for the script, and the multi-awarded Romy Vitug for cinematography.

ZUBIRI. Hopes to become a competent and effective actress.

ABS-CBN . . .

(From page E6)

enough to merit an hour-long slot. Ariel Ureta's name also appears in the credits as creative consultant. The veteran comedian is back after a long absence from the tube. He directed the popular "Ober da Bakod" on GMA-7 many years ago.

Star Awards on RPN-9

The awards season officially begins tonight with the 18th Star Awards for Movies. The affair will be telecast live from the UP Theater on RPN-9 with Sharon Cuneta and Richard Gomez as co-hosts. Trivia host is Pops Fernandez, with Judy Ann Santos and Dingdong Dantes as anchorpersons.

There will be five production numbers to spice up the evening. Charlene Gonzales is featured in a Cinderella-inspired number, her first appearance after giving birth to twins. Singing the seven nominated theme songs are Jolina Magdangal, Kyla, Roselle Nava and Julia Clarete, together with the Streetboys.

Featured in a dance segment are Angelika de la Cruz, Antoinette Taus and Isabel Granada. The finale features sexy stars Ara Mina, Patricia Javier and Sunshine Cruz with the VIP Dancers.

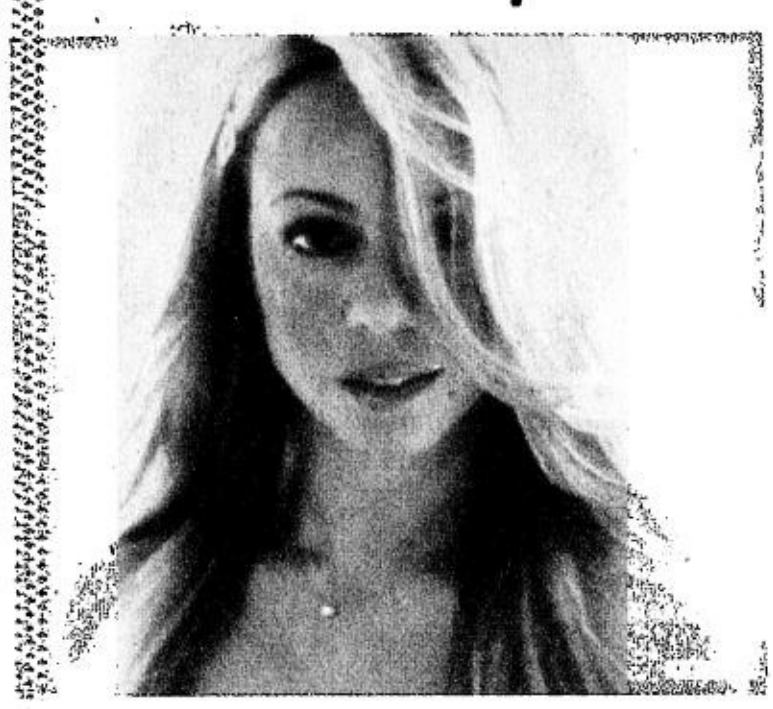
'Band of Brothers' marathon

If you missed HBO's "Band of Brothers" or you want to watch it all over again, then tune in on March 14 and 15 at 9 p.m. for a marathon airing of the miniseries. HBO will air the war epic's five parts back-to-back each night!

"Band of Brothers" recently won the American Film Institute Movie or Miniseries of the Year award. It also won for Best Miniseries or Original Movie in the Golden Globes. The special, based on Stephen Ambrose's bestseller and executive-produced by Tom Hanks and Steven Spielberg, is the story of ordinary men in extraordinary times. It revolves around the members of Easy Company who parachuted into France on D-Day, June 6, 1944, fought in several decisive battles and went on to capture the "Eagle's Nest," Adolf Hitler's Bavarian hideaway.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
SATURDAYSpecial
SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 2002

Mariah Carey continues to grow as a musical artist



MARIAH. Humbly admits that she still has a lot to learn.

By Mary Ann A. Bautista

HER voice soars no matter what song she sings. Mariah Carey stamps each song with pain, joy, passion, sincerity and honesty. She practically bares her soul. So when she came out with a compilation album, she had a tough time selecting her songs. She has compiled an extraordinary amount of hits yet she humbly admits that she still has a lot to learn.

Record deal

"I feel like I'm still growing as a musical artist. I feel that I wrote some of my best songs even before I had a record deal. I have a song, 'Reflections on Glitter' which I feel is in the caliber of my best songs.

"Because of my songs, I understand myself better as an artist and as a person. I was so young when I started making music. I was just a kid with a demo tape, then the first albums came one after another. I didn't take a break.

"But I like being a workaholic. Though now I can sometimes sit back and appreciate and enjoy the process of making the music. Performing out there can be fun, instead of being on a treadmill that doesn't stop," Mariah sighs. Q &A:

Is your album reflective of who you are as a person?

Yes, it's a portrait of how I've grown as an artist. Some of the big hits were not my favorites, but I'll always love my song "One Sweet Day" because fans are always requesting it. There's also "Hero." I think the most important thing is that the fans get something that they like and that they want to listen to.

Emotional journey

Some fans say they've never heard the song, "So Blessed" before, or that they want to check out "Daydream." It's an emotional journey to have this album.

It started with a song that was written in a studio at the back of a woodshed. Thank God, I'm still having fun with my music. It's what gets me through everything in life.

For a songwriter, some songs trigger special memories. Can you share some of your good memories?

I remember that I wanted to come together with BoyzIIMen to do "One Sweet Day." We clicked and we had a similar idea about the melody. I remember writing "Love Takes Time" because we needed a pop song for the album.

When I listen to it now, I understand why people like it, because it is so simple yet it is also emotional. It's hard for me to talk about different tracks because they all evoke a different memory.

Can you pick a favorite song?

"Fantasy" is a definite favorite among the up-tempo records. But there are favorites that I haven't heard for a long time, songs like "Can't Let Go" and "Any Time You Need A Friend."

Older stuff

I don't listen to my own music everyday, especially the older stuff, so it's nice to go back and hear those songs. It's hard to pick a favorite because I'm also a songwriter.

'I'm still having fun with my music. It's what gets me through everything in life'

Are you more comfortable with ballads or upbeat tunes?

I like both. People ask me to sing upbeat tunes. People love the regular version as well as the techno-house version of "Dream Lover." I also like singing ballads because they're so emotional.

You have a knack for turning your ballads into club anthems. What's your secret?

I just watch and listen to my audience. I can redo ballads and turn them into dance records because I collaborate with David Morales. I give him free rein with the track and I rearrange the vocals and rewrite the song. I don't know, we get inspired just sitting there, listening to the beat, and singing whatever comes to mind.

Other artists

She also doesn't mind collaborating with other artists. She did "I'll Be There" with Trey Lorenz; "Endless Love" with Luther; "One Sweet Day" with BoyzIIMen; "When You Believe" with Whitney Houston and "Thank God I Found You" with Joe and 98 Degrees.

What is it about your music that your fans connect with?

Each song should lift you out of a bad mood. It should touch you emotionally. A song can do that!

COLLINS. Loves to keep moving.

Joan Collins is enjoying marriage number five

LONDON—After an idyllic honeymoon with fifth husband Percy Gibson, actress Joan Collins says she is ready to get back to work.

New novel

"I love putting my feet up and enjoying my new married life, but that doesn't mean I can't work as well," the 68-year-old star, who is currently promoting her new novel, said in an interview with GMTV Monday.

She dismissed the age difference with 36-year-old Gibson, a Peruvian-born theater manager, with the quip, "Look, I'll tell you about the age thing—if he dies, he dies!"

The couple, who married at a private ceremony in London on Feb. 17, have just returned from a two-week honeymoon on the Malaysian island of Pangkor Laut.

"We had our own private island—our own beach, our own swimming pool, three people to wait on us hand and foot—and the most incredible water, completely unpolluted, completely blue and warm, and just utter heaven," Collins said.

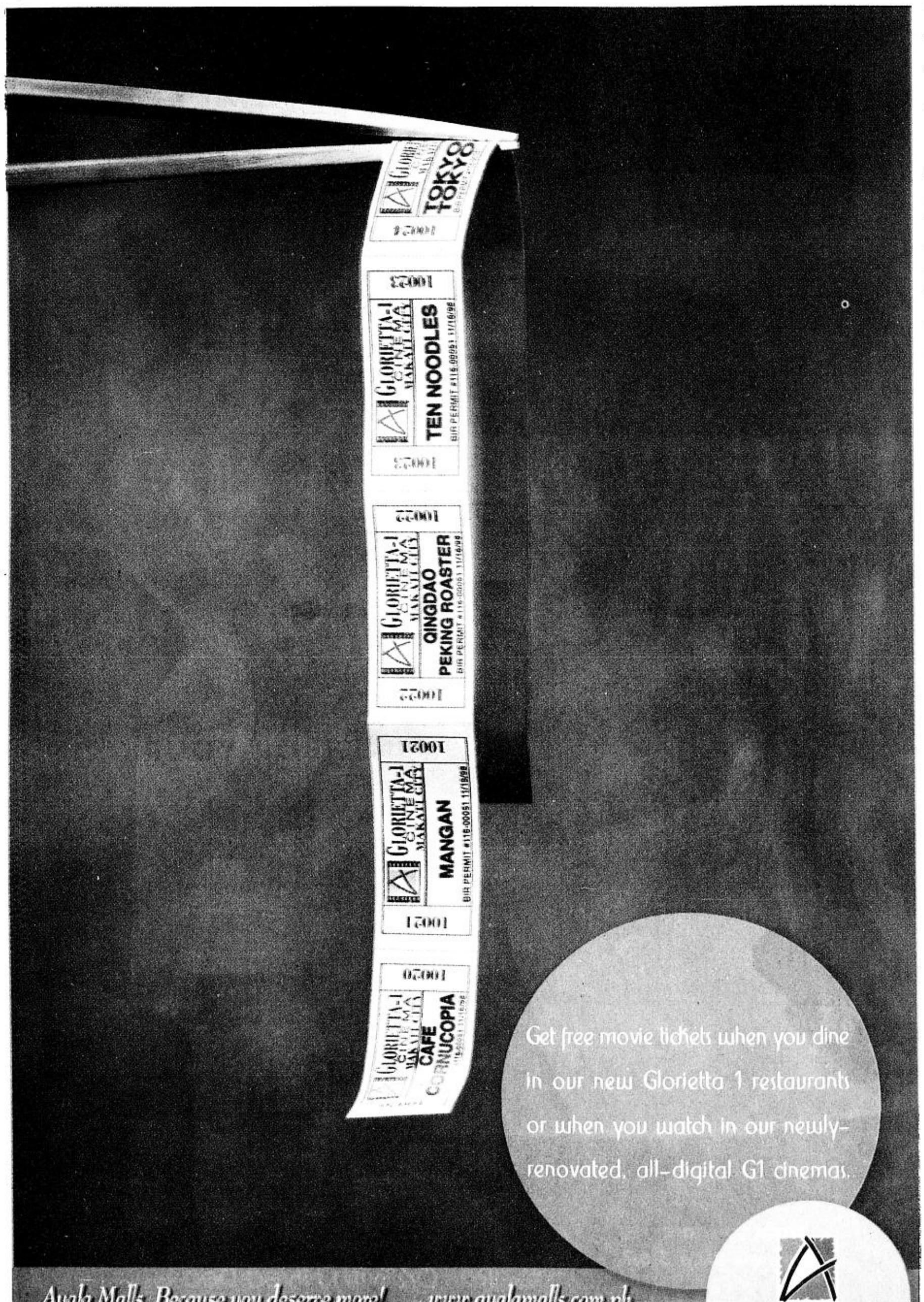
Jungle walks

"I read five books, I wrote an article. He went on all kinds of jungle walks, then on kayaks and all those kinds of things that guys do, and I just said, 'Have a nice time—I'm just reading my Dean Koontz.'"

The actress, who is currently promoting her new novel, "Star Quality," said the couple may make New York their base, but she loves to keep moving.

"We both love New York . . . and so I think we might move over there for a while. But I'm the sort of person who doesn't like to stay in one place a lot," she said.

"Home will be wherever it is that we're working." *AP*



SATURDAY Special

Goldie Hawn supports anti-gossip campaign

STORY ON PAGE F2

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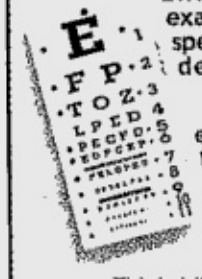
The 20/20/20 Eyecare Habit

If you don't want to spend unnecessarily on eye examinations and computer-specific glasses, it's time you developed a new habit.



It's called the 20/20/20 eyecare habit, which means: for every 20 minutes spent in front of the computer take a break by looking at an object 20 feet away for 20 seconds.[1]

This habit will not only save you money; it will also save your eyesight.

Our sense of sight is probably the most important among the senses. You know it. Everybody knows it. Even your eyes know it.

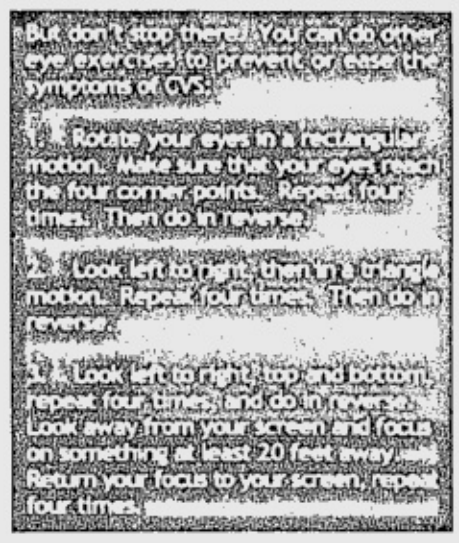
Yes, you read that last sentence right. Your eyes know how essential they are to your life -- and work. That's why they constantly blink to lubricate and relax their working muscles, close instantaneously whenever a foreign object threatens them, and produce tears to wash away tiny objects lodged inside them.

Unfortunately -- and unwittingly -- we're hurting our eyes. Charlotte Saxby, M.D., an ophthalmologist in Seattle says, "Any muscle held in one position too long will strain. And when you concentrate on a task, like working at the computer, for any length of time, your inner eye muscles tighten up, and you forget to blink. That's when your eyes get irritated, dry, and uncomfortable."[2]

And because of the tendency of people not to blink as much when they're doing computer work, 70-75% of those who use the computer everyday are now suffering from *CVS or Computer Vision Syndrome a vision problem associated with prolonged computer use.*

So, how do you know if you're already suffering from CVS? Well, you can look for any of these symptoms: tired and dry eyes, blurred near vision and blurred distance vision, headache, difficulty in changing focus, red eyes, burning sensation in the eyes, and sensitivity to glare.

If you're experiencing any of these symptoms, you can relieve your eyes by doing the 20/20/20 eyecare habit described above.



The exercises above are tried and tested solutions to computer-strained eyes. Practice them and you take care of your most vital sense.

Artificial tears, like Eye-Mo Revitalizing Formula, are helpful, too, in lubricating your eyes. Its new formula gently soothes and refreshes the eyes - just like tears.

Reference

1. "Beating Computer Syndrome : Set-up, Wet up, Get up", S. Plancich, MD; http://www.dte.mil/airtrain/hd_news/Jan2000/n20000119_computervn.html

2. "Eye Strain", C. Saxby MD; http://www.preventmedicine.com/healing/cond_ak/eyestrain.html

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The academe's Pasado film awards announce 2001 winners

By Bibsy M. Carballo

IF the number of film award-giving bodies is any indication of the role of movies in Philippine culture, then educators' involvement in establishing standards is certainly appropriate.

Mirror

Movies are a mirror of our lives, they tell us what's right and what's wrong, they produce the idols our children emulate. These and other similar concerns are what prompted a group from the academe to put up Pasado, Pampelikulang Samahan ng mga Dalubguro.

For the past four years, they have been quietly reviewing and assessing Filipino films not only as art, but also in conjunction with their impact on Philippine society.

Come March 16, 5 p.m. at one of their member universities, Pasado will give out its awards in 10 categories plus the Natatanging Guro award for practitioners in film who are in the field of education as well. Awards are given to best film, director, actress, actor, supporting actress, supporting actor, story, screenplay, editing and cinematography.

PROF. Maria Elma Betonio (seated, second from left) with Pasado board members.

33 members

Pasado president Prof. Maria Elma P. Betonio of the National Teachers College says that the group is composed of 33 members from various universities (membership composed of faculty with an MA requirement), who review the films according to their particular specialization.

The reason, she says, that they don't have music and production design categories is because they still don't feel adequate enough to pass judgement on these categories. However, as membership grows, she is confident that they will acquire members with specialization in these fields.

Unlike other film award-giving bodies, Pasado includes in its objectives the citation and recommendation of films as material for teaching and learning in the social sciences, literature, arts and humanities.

In its criteria for selection are artistic value, nationalism, realistic use of the Pilipino language, awareness of our national heritage, significant learning, and new trends in filmmaking.

Presentors of the awards are university deans and presidents. Intermission numbers are provided by students.

Big winner for this year is "Bagong Buwan" with eight awards—best film, direction for Marilou Diaz Abaya, best actor for Cesar Montano (shared with Ricky Davao for "Minsan May Isang Puso"), best supporting actor for Ronnie Lazaro (shared with Jiro Manio in "La Vida Rosa"), best supporting actress for Caridad Sanchez, best story, screenplay, editing, cinematorgraphy.

The only other winner is Jaclyn Jose for "Tuhog" (also nominated for "Minsan May Isang Puso").

Achievement

"Bagong Buwan's" solo victory in the best film category can be considered an achievement, since 1998 had three sharing the award ("Jose Rizal," "Sa Pusod ng Dagat," and "Bata, Bata Paano Ka Ginawa"), three again in 1999 ("Bulaklak ng Maynila," "Muro Ami," and "Saranggola"), and three again in 2000 ("Bayaning Third World," Anak," and "Tanging Yaman").

Natatanging Guro in 1998 was Dr. Rustica Carpio, in 1999 Clodualdo del Mundo, 2000 Nanette Inventor, and this year Dr. Efren Abueg.

With its distinguished membership from 11 Metro Manila universities, one would imagine judging to go smoothly, with nary a problem. Such is not the case, says Prof. Betonio, although their disagreements center on grounds very different from those of other award-giving bodies.

Debate

This year's debate for selection of films to vote on was particularly heated, remembers Prof. Betonio. The center of the controversy was the film "Mila" from Star Cinema and many members were for excluding it because it gave a wrong and bad impression of the teaching profession. As many more liberal members were for its inclusion, "Mila" made it to the final list.

Founded by Dr. Flaviano Lirio Jr. of FEU, Pasado has gained adherents among educators. Its annual fee of P1,000 per member has been sufficient to fund its film awards and various other projects, like seminars on film. Its trophy and its logo which shows a person wearing a toga and a hand holding a torch with film negatives making up its flames, was designed by students from FEU.

"We are very proud of our selections so far. Many of them have made the international festival circuit. We are working on getting more members from more schools for the coming year," says Prof. Betonio.

"POTTER" and "Rings" have joined the top 10 film hits of all time in less than a year.

'Harry Potter,' 'Lord of the Rings' conjure up movie history, boost reading

LOS ANGELES—Two fantasy magic movies, "Harry Potter" and "The Lord of the Rings," have conjured up entertainment history by joining the top 10 box-office cash cows of all time, while sparking a youth reading revival.

No mean feat

The studios that made the 2001 wizardly blockbusters, which are still drawing millions across the globe, said Tuesday the achievement was no mean feat, given the fact that only three films joined the top 50 grossers last year.

"Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone," released in November, has taken a whopping $941.7 million in worldwide ticket receipts so far, to become the second-biggest-selling movie in history behind 1997's "Titanic."

The Warner Bros. picture, the first in a series of three, has been translated into 43 languages and has taken $158.3 million in Japan and $92.6 million in Britain, its two most impressive markets after North America.

The film, to be followed by its first sequel in November, has caused an international social phenomenon, spurred by the marketing wizardry and merchandizing cunning of Warner Bros.' parent, AOL Time-Warner Inc.

Eighth place

"The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring" stands in eighth place, with $749.6 million in box office returns since its December opening, putting it just behind 1994's animated film "The Lion King," according to producers New Line Cinema.

The two pictures, both based on best-selling books by British authors, also appear to be sparking a revival in reading, with fictional novels in both series selling like hotcakes as punters flock to the cinema.

The "Harry Potter" books, written by Scottish author J.K. Rowling in the 1990s, have been flying off the shelves, while J.R.R. Tolkien's 1950s classic "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy has seen sales boom since the hit film's release.

The pre-publicity and December's release of the film has seen "Rings'" book sales rise steadily across the globe: Last week in Britain, "Rings" volume one rose three positions to ninth place on the best-seller list, while volume two was in 16th place.

While "Rings'" initial print run was set at just 3,500, with little interest expected in the fantasy world of Oxford University professor Tolkien, "The Hobbit" and "The Lord of the Rings" had sold more than 100 million copies, making them the most popular fiction in the world. *AFP*

Goldie Hawn supports anti-gossip campaign

By Calvin Woodward

WASHINTON—Gossip doesn't cut it with Goldie Hawn. The snide personal aside is not only destructive, she says, but dreary; and she's asking people—nicely—to stop.

Unkind words

The actress returned last week to the city of her birth to say that Americans still shaken by Sept. 11 should return not just to normal, but to a "better normal" that recognizes how hurtful gossip and other unkind words can be.

Hawn spoke on behalf of an anti-gossip campaign called "Words Can Heal." Hard as it may be to imagine either Washington or Hollywood getting along without gossip, Hawn said it al makes her eyes glaze over.

"I have sat around dinner tables of others where they have done nothing but talk about people the whole dinner," she said in an interview. "I didn't want to be there. Not because it was terrible what they say, but because I was bored."

Hawn made her name as the giggly airhead with the psychedelic body paint on "Rowan & Martin's Laugh-In" in the late 1960s and went on to a career as a comedy film actress.

Actor

She's not been a huge target for gossip columnists in recent years, although some people have clucked over the fact that she and actor Kurt Russell decided years ago to raise a family without being wed.

Clucking over the behavior of others is tiresome, she said.

"There's many ways to look at this," she ventured, sunny blond hair spilling on a black suit. "One is that you're just a gerbil running in a cage with that little roundy, roundy toy and going nowhere . . . talking about people. Or you can have sun. You can actually talk about real stuff."

Hawn opened a speech at the National Press Club with a trademark giggle but from there it was all business. When she was asked in a pleading note from the floor to reprise the "Laugh-In" cry," Sock it to me," she declined, noting she had never been the "sock-it-to-me girl."

That was Judy Carne. *AP*

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Aga is voted box-office king

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WHO is Film Year 2001's box-office movie king, Aga Muhlach or Robin Padilla? For lack of really solid news, the show biz world is making a big to-do over this ostensible controversy.

Well, it looks like Aga has won by a nose. Although Robin starred in three movies last year as opposed to Aga's two, Aga's starrers were both reported to be blockbusters, while Robin's movies were less consistent.

If you're not all that hot about joining the fan-dango, the important thing here really is the fact that both Aga and Robin had some hit films last year, which is more than you can say for most of the other male stars in the biz.

So, enough of trying to pit Aga against Robin, in dated *pintakasi* fashion. Congratulations to *both* of them, and thank heavens for *big* mercies.

As for action stars and other male luminaries whose films didn't do all that well last year, it's back to the drawing boards to see what new options they have for reviving their flagging careers.

Come to think of it, they're still better off than the many other male stars who didn't even get to do a single movie in Film Year 2001. They've had to bide their time by acting on TV, but it isn't quite the same thing, is it?

Television may be the happening medium in entertainment now, but there's nothing like a full-length film to take a star all the way to the top. Trouble is, there's precious little room at the top of the movie heap these days for stars who can't seem to do anything fresh and new.

Additional suggestions

Our recent times piece on viewers' suggestions of improvements on local quiz shows has elicited these additional notes which we hope the TV people concerned will act on:

For "Who Wants To be A Millionaire": Don't offer a check if the contestant is sure of his answer.

Also, for the Phone a Friend lifeline, the 30-second time limit should start *after* the question has been asked. Some questions take so long to ask that the friend has only a few seconds left for his response, and is therefore too highly stressed to come up with a truly helpful response.

For "The Weakest Link": Contestants should be taught how not to be such poor losers. It leaves a bad taste in the mouth.

For quiz-show hosts in general: Please don't say, "The answer, of course, is . . ." because the "of course" makes you sound smug and know-it-all. It's also a rather cheap affectation because viewers sense that you "know" the answer (of course!) *only* because you've seen the answer sheet in advance.

MTV-Penshoppe Youth Council semi-finalists announced

The 21 semi-finalists for the 10 slots in the MTV-Penshoppe Youth Council have been selected from the 40 quarter-finalists who were interviewed and screened.

The semi-finalists are Miguel Azcuna, Brad Turvy, Uriah Vanden' Bos, Richard Lozano, Terence Koa, Marco Lobregat, Alexander Felix, Douglas Robinson, Geof Briz, Carlos Paolo San Luis, Jacklyn Cartesano, Nichole Schulze, Kathleen Hilario, Treisha Moussavie, Theresa Paron, Joanna Gonzales, Danielle Mendoza and Kelly Misa.

The magic 10 will be announced in a party at the Boracay Terraces resort on Boracay island on March 9.

Sylvester Stallone stars in 'D-Tox'

In "D-Tox," action superstar Sylvester Stallone plays a traumatized cop who checks into a rehab center, where he discovers that his fellow-patients are being murdered one by one. Stallone describes the film as "a dark journey through hell. Even shooting it for four months was tough."

Stallone chose to do this movie over the many scripts he's been offered because "it's a different alternative—about a hero, but not really. My character is a man whose work eventually destroys his life. He's completely out of control, and he ends up in hell.

"A lot of people have to live with a difficult, dark problem they don't tell anybody about. This film is a study of one such nightmare, and then he gets some justice in the end."

'Godspell'

The Harlequin Theater Guild of De La Salle University will stage the popular musical "Godspell" at St. Cecilia's Hall, St. Scholastica's College, at 3 and 6:30 p.m. on March 9 and 6:30 p.m. on March 10. Call Janeth at 524,4611, local 702.

The show's 10 featured actors are Kathy Collantes, Joy Fortich, Pam Jocson, Giselle Go, Camille Enriquez, Kate Hassaram, Oliver Oliveros, Gerard dela Peña, G.A. Fallarme and Alvin dela Peña.

Credits: director, Chari Arespacochaga; musical director, Romy Fortich; choreographer, Chinie Nepomuceno. "Godspell" is based on the gospel of St. Matthew, with music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz.

Italian Cinema Week

The 2002 Italian Cinema Week is ongoing at Equitable PCI-Bank's Antonio Molina Hall, with remaining screenings on March 11 and 14. Schedule: March 11, 4:30 p.m., "Francesco." 7 p.m., "Ignorant Fairies." 8:30 p.m., "The Tartar's Desert."

March 14, 6:30 p.m., "Lamerica." 8:30 p.m., "The Leopard."

THERESA Paron and Carlos Paolo San Luis are two of the 21 semi-finalists in the MTV-Penshoppe search for Youth Council members.

STALLONE. Plays a traumatized cop in his new starrer.

'Edgar, Edgar Musikahan' and a songbird from Iloilo

By Remy M. Umerez

MANY albums certified multi-platinum and several music awards have made Parokya ni Edgar a leading alternative band in the country.

In addition, Parokya also won MTV-Asia's Viewers Choice trophy for their best-selling music video, "Harana." Another Parokya video, "Picha Pie" won the MTV Philippines Best Group Video plum.

The group has been consistently voted by some FM radio stations as Band/Artist of the Year since 1997 up to the present.

Parokya's new album release under Universal Records, "Edgar, Edgar Musikahan," is their fifth, reaffirming their strong hold on today's music audience.

12 original songs

The package features 12 original songs and two contemporary versions of Pinoy pop classics.

With summer in mind, "Swimming Beach" was handpicked as the carrier single. As bonus, a free VCD of the carrier cut is included in the CD and cassette packages, complete with lyrics and chords.

All songs evince the group's infectious humor, but with deeper meaning as well. Parokya has succeeded in relating to a very wide audience, having crossed over to the pop realm.

In typical fashion, Parokya goes romantic in "Nanjan" and easily make amends in "Sorry Na," a move to patch up a lover's quarrel.

Pensive mood

"Tungkol Sa Iyo" is very hip-hop. "Y" has a pensive mood which affirms the band's serious side.

Pinoy values and traditions are tackled in "Family Dinner," an all-out rocker.

Parokya felt elated when the incomparable Apo Hiking Society came out with their version of "Harana" in their latest album "Banda Rito." They now return the compliment, interpreting Apo's "Pumapatak ang Ulan."

Being big fans of Apo, they find their lyrics cool "*at parang nagkukwento lang sa* audience." "Pumapatak" is their own way of paying tribute to the country's first alternative group to cross over to mainstream territory.

The Hotdog is another group they admire most and, in their version of "Beh Buti Nga," the original teasing of the song is not a bit diminished.

GONZAGA. Talented singer from Iloilo.

Parokya respects all kinds of music and would even listen to music played "*pabaligtad*" which they think is funny.

Parokya is composed of six-well-focused musicians—Chito Miranda and Vinci Montaner (vocals), Darius Semana and Gabriel Seekee (guitars), Buhawi Meneses (bass) and Dindin Moreno (drums).

Meanwhile, one of the popular bands in Iloilo is Polym, whose services are always sought whenever a Manila band holds a concert in the South.

A former lead vocalist of Polym is Lenterlee Epanag who, under the management of Artists and Friends Entertainment, has been re-christened Lennie Gonzaga.

Break

Len decided to stay with her brother in Quezon City and seek the break she was dreaming of as a solo performer. A habitue of Stone House piano bar, he introduced his sister to Ely Folmaran, GM of Artists and Friends, and an audition followed.

For two months, Len was a regular performer at the piano bar and her set mostly consisted of songs by Regine Velasquez. An ardent fan, she has a complete collection of Regine's albums.

Her biggest exposure to date was at Kuya's Bar at Villa Estrella in Bauang, La Union, where she was the featured artist in their New Year's Eve celebration. She was such a big hit that Len agreed to do another show last Valentine.

Lani Misalucha, Zsa Zsa Padilla and of course Regine Velasquez are the songbirds in whose footsteps Lennie would like to follow. She knows it will be a hard climb, but the talented Ilongga is determined to sacrifice to achieve her goal.

Gwyneth Paltrow to make British stage debut in May

By Matt Wolf

PALTROW. Has agreed to star in "Proof."

LONDON—Gwyneth Paltrow is poised to make her British theater debut in "Proof" in London in the spring with her "Shakespeare in Love" director John Madden in charge.

"We kind of agreed on it in principle a week ago," Madden said last week, "having spent a great deal of time in 'Shakespeare in Love' with me saying to her you've got to go on the stage."

Paltrow is due to open at London's Donmar Warehouse Theater in the same part that won Broadway actress Mary-Louise Parker a Tony Award for best actress in June. On screen, Paltrow won an Academy Award for "Shakespeare in Love."

Mathematical genius

David Auburn's Pulitzer Prize-winning play, still running in New York, will cast Paltrow as Catherine, a talented young woman who has inherited her father's mathematical genius—and may also have inherited his mental instability.

The remaining three roles have yet to be cast, though Madden said he expected the remainder of the company to be British.

The joint presence of Paltrow and Madden might seem a dry run for an eventual film of the play, but Madden—who began directing in the theater in London and New York before shifting to film—said such thinking was premature.

Piece of theater

"We're doing this as a piece of theater," he said in an interview. "That's what the focus is and what the raison d'etre is."

"Proof" begins rehearsals April 8 and starts previews May 9, prior to a May 15 opening night. The limited run will end June 15.

Paltrow comes naturally by any stage leanings. Her mother, Blythe Danner, is a Broadway veteran who most recently starred last spring in the revival of Stephen Sondheim's "Follies," earning a Tony nomination. *AP*

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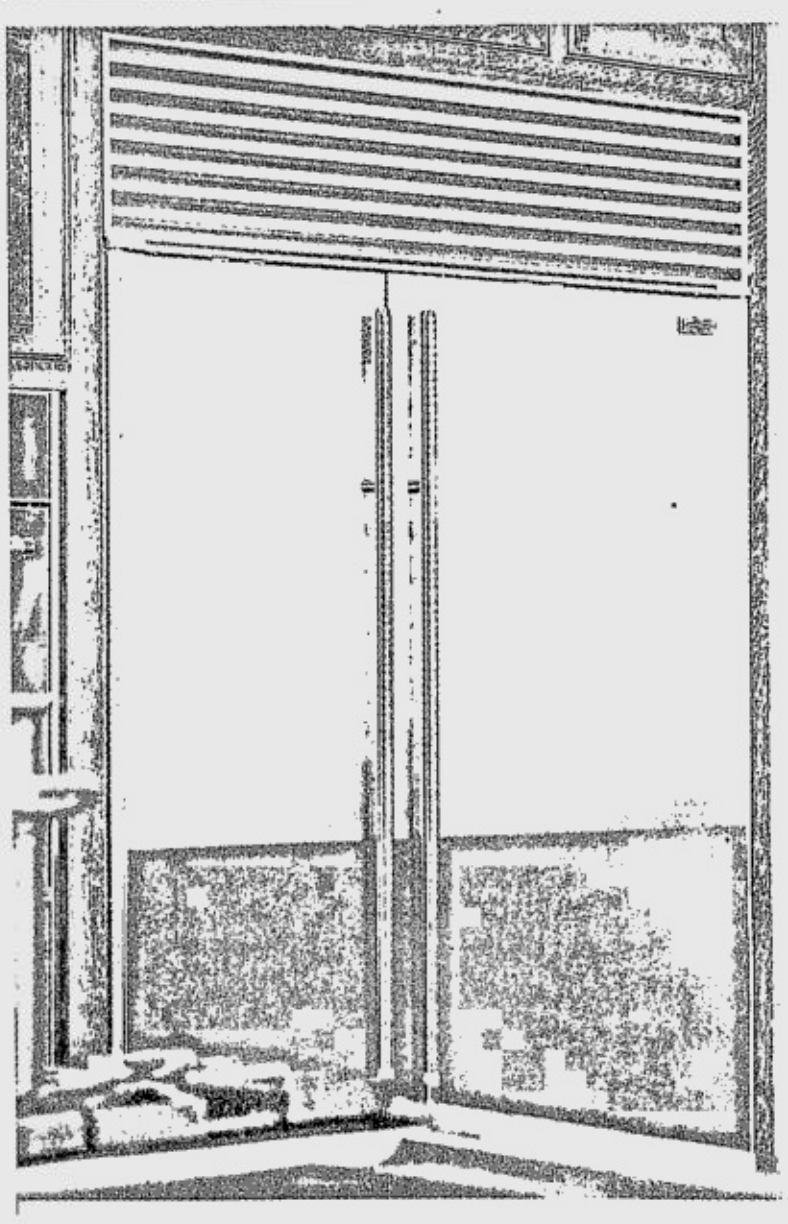

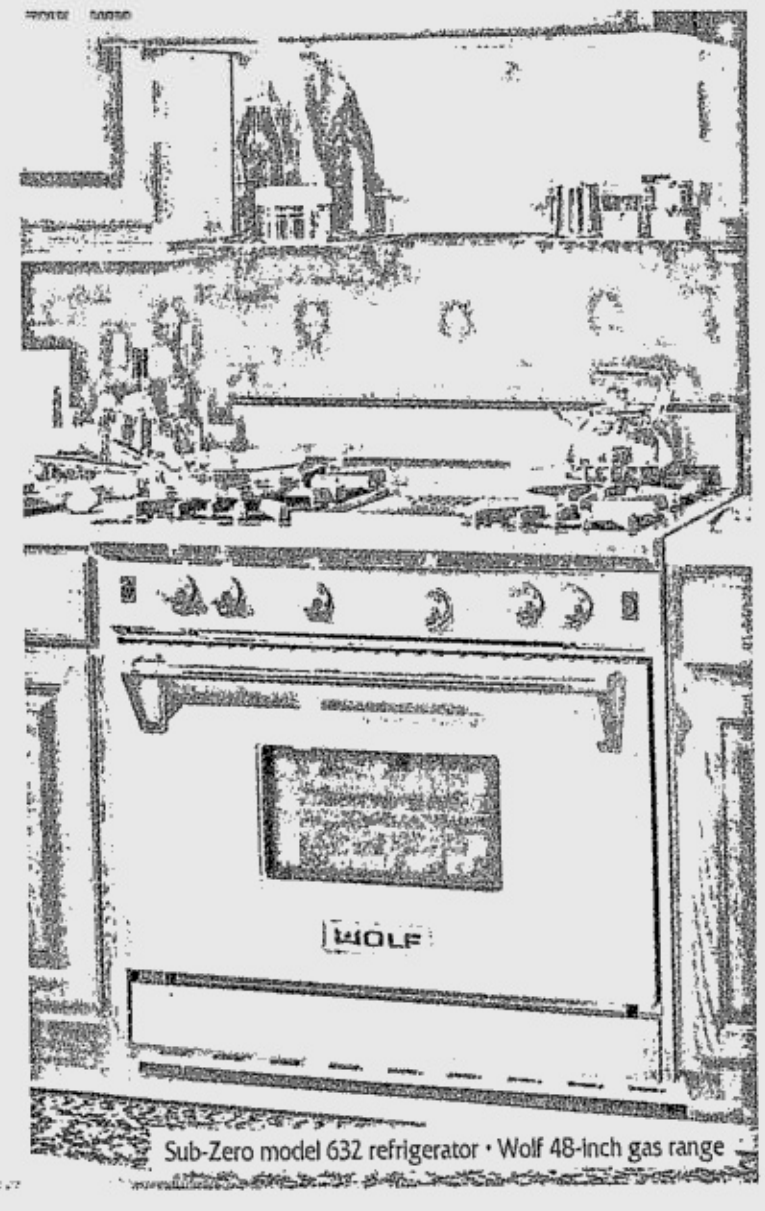

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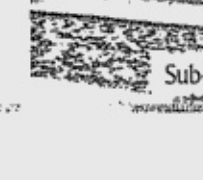
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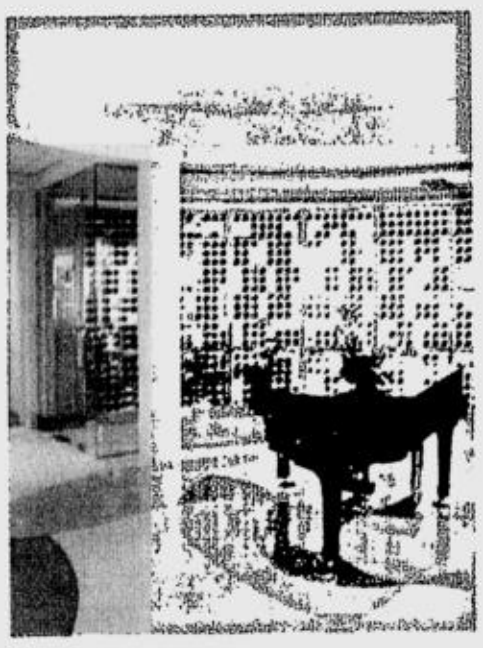

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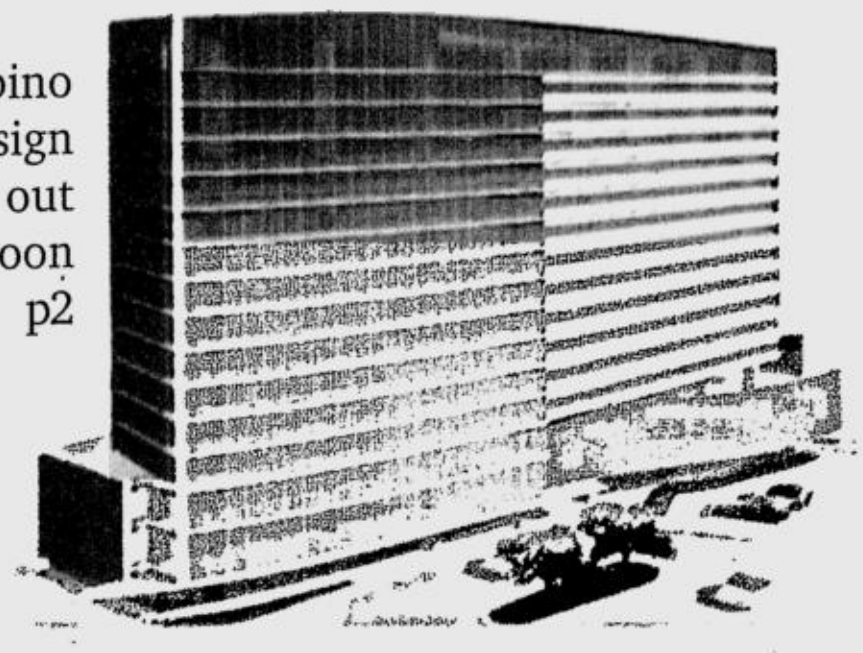


RUSTAN'S HOME RIDES THE SUMMER WAVE

SUMMER means outings and picnics. There is a certain casual atmosphere that comes with the season which gives way to outdoor activities and Rustan's Home has just the right stuff for this time of the year.

Topping the list of Rustan's Home's summer offering are cutlery and plate chargers with graphic floral designs, which are the rage in Europe. These pieces are given an informal flavor with a satin matte finish ideal for garden parties or evening barbecues. Unlike the usual mirror finish, satin matte pieces in steel do not have the glossy polish used in formal table settings, thus it is ideal simple and informal dining affairs.

Rustan's Home also offers a range of juicers and blenders which allow one to concoct refreshing drinks and a choice of grillers from Italian brand Ferraboli for outdoor dining. The grillers range from simple steel contraptions to those with wooden compartments with wheels that allow one to move it about.

For home décor, Rustan's Home offers large pieces from vases to candles. Following international trends, Rustan's Home décor pieces are exaggerated in size. One has a choice of huge vases from all over the world, which can be filled with the flowers of the season. Candles, today's best-selling home décor, also come in large sizes that are easily noticeable in the home. These décor do not only light up a room but are interesting conversation pieces that give character to any space.

Rustan's Home Summer Collection features a wide range of locally made as well as international pieces that are not only of high quality but also reflect international design trends. At Rustan's Home, one can find just about anything to suit one's taste.

ADVERTORIAL

The look that you're looking for - only at Rustan's.

Mix. Match. Choose a classic design or go funky with contemporary pieces. You can't go wrong at the New Rustan's Home. Our newly expanded floor houses world-famous brands, and is arranged to make shopping and decorating as simple as can be.

Rustan's Home

Rustan's

Filipino design breaks out of cocoon

By Cathy Saldaña-Nolido
Contributor

ONE wonderful evening, a group of architects and interior designers gathered together in a convivial sharing of hearty meals, great desserts and excellent coffee. Brimming with excitement over the start of another year, energized by the promise of good projects, and warmed by common aspirations, they shared forecasts and hopes for the industry, outlined design ideas and insights, defined client wishes and concepts.

The Filipino can look forward to more interesting forms, colors and textures, as the consciousness for good design has gone beyond homes and gardens, from fine dining places to fast-food joints. Through the World Wide Web of wonders, new books and magazines, travels and foreign influences, the Filipino has become more sophisticated, seeking to enliven spaces from cozy apartments to compact condos, to sprawling estates.

Members of the group—they who lead an army of draftsmen and creative thinkers, and mobilize working crews, suppliers, craftsmen and builders—offer inspiring thoughts on Philippine design 2002.

PLANTS and natural stones fill up corners whether in condo spaces or sprawling estates.

Bong Recio and **Meloy Casas**, partners in Recio + Casas Architects

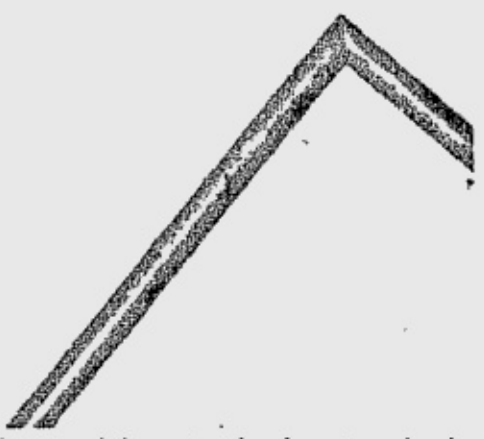
Clients: Pacific Plaza Towers, Ayala Greenbelt Mall, the Ateneo University Church, the British School, The Manor in Camp John Hay in Baguio.

Forecast: As globalization moves from the trading to the design front, the Filipino home shall welcome more streamlined designs. Basics will not change but forms, proportions and functions will become more interesting.

White, as well as splashes of colors, will continue to be used generously in exteriors and interiors. Pastels will go only so far before everyone tires of them. Textures will be more exciting.

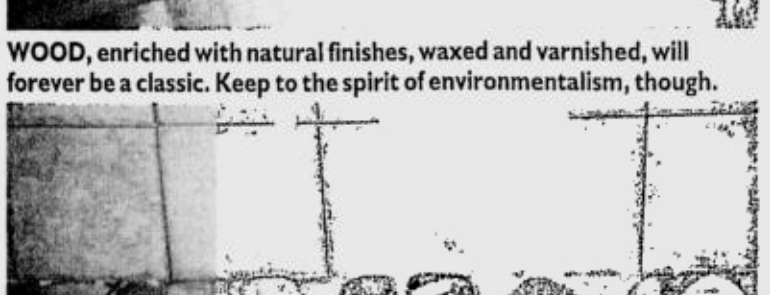
Demand for mid-income housing, designed for a market on a budget, will grow. This need has to be addressed, generating more support for architects and the industry in the process. Many materials that are inexpensive to install and easy to maintain, such as terrazzo, should be revived. Vinyl tiles should be further developed.

Recio and Casas see the contemporary Asian character coming into its own as a design standard, with interiors and finishes that are basic and minimalist, exploring the use of dark or very light finishes for the still-dominant wood. Colors will be in the usual range although, Casas says, "If it's my house, it will always be white."

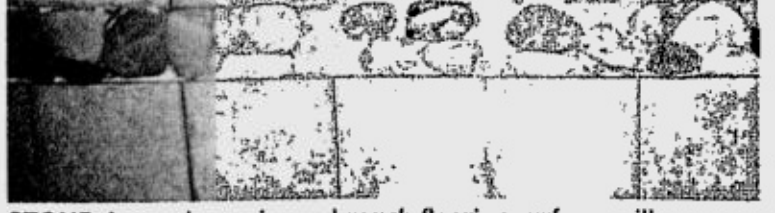


MATERIALS are evoking the natural elements, using them at random in various states and forms.

WOOD, enriched with natural finishes, waxed and varnished, will forever be a classic. Keep to the spirit of environmentalism, though.



STONE, layered mosaics and rough flooring surfaces will dominate the scene.



NATURAL reeds, like "runo," woven materials and local fabrics will dictate the color palette.

TILES, from natural stone, semi-glazed or non-skid will be neutral in tone, with color splashes as accents.

Andy Locsin and **Ed Ledesma**, principal design consultant and senior partner, respectively, of Locsin and Associates

Clients: Manila's genteel society, institutional and clubhouse projects and a cluster of the Ayala Greenbelt development.

Forecast: Signature courtyards will have elements of water, and feature generous use of natural stone and wood. More importantly, a design should show some elegant restraint, leaving something to the imagination.

Locsin and Ledesma espouse true tropical comfort. Each project is always a personal enclave, a private resort for its owners. The duo's cohesive approach to architecture begins with the structure embracing the natural form and contours of the site, revealing layers of spaces as rooms open into one another. They are partial to a lot of windows and glass, mixed with natural stone flooring, in a color palette that is never boring. Ceiling treatments always have a definite point of interest, accented with lights.

Locsin and Ledesma would like to see more innovations in the use of local stones and other natural materials such as laminated bamboo. Anchor pieces of traditional Filipino and Asian furniture find their way in a Locsin-designed home, leading the parade of furnishings and other decorative pieces. Heights and door widths are above the standard, as that is their signature.

Anna Sy, partner in CS Architects

Clients: I-Bank branches, the Net One Plaza and various residentials

Forecast: Local stones should be used more. She hopes that the old *capiz* shell can be treated in a more modern way, and that suppliers will reinvent the terrazzo flooring by mixing many kinds of stones. She sees a need to develop more natural Philippine fabrics like *sinamay*, weaves and other materials for use in ceilings and upholstery, among others.

There will be a lot more studies as spaces are created, centering on a design language that is Asian on one hand and Filipino on the other.

Emmanuel Miñana, principal of E. Miñana and Associates

Clients: Specializes in residential and commercial work. Clients' needs are considered and then pared down, reduced to more essential forms. His designs are quiet and well lit, with open plans leading to gardens.

Forecast: The tropical style will always emerge, featuring bold colors. He sees proportion as uniquely personal, generating rhythm and horizontality. The Filipino home should involve a progression of scale, revealing itself from the *porte cochiere*, doorway, to the foyer, the living and dining areas. A range of heights is achieved and the home opens up in soaring space.

Ivy and **Cynthia Almario**, partners in Ivy and Associates Interior Design Group

Clients: Condominums, retail outlets in Rockwell Power Plant

Forecast: After the Sept. 11 attack on America, there's more cocooning, as more people see the value of family sustenance. They point out that the Aman resort cum Asian look is very popular.

Ivy says the challenge of the Filipino designer is finding the clever mix of organic silhouettes with Asian. More people are taking themselves less seriously, editing segments of their lives, cutting down on clutter, going back to the basics.

Wenge wood is overused. The sisters are looking at new treatments and finishes, to define what is new and hip. Ivy and Cynthia listen to fashion editors who dictate color silhouettes. In a sense, they say Hollywood still dominates as a point of influence.

Locally, a challenge to suppliers is the introduction of more species of wood, if not as actual planks, then as veneer sheets. To make veneer "more sensuous," walls or surfaces should be played up in terms of volume. The weathering of materials, whether for exterior or interior use, has to be addressed.

Dan Lichauco of the firm bearing his name

Clients: flagship projects in the Ateneo University, and residential, institutional and commercial units.

Forecast: He calls for site-consciousness that is, taking into account contours, existing natural elements, and landscapes. Sun protection and sun-shading devices should be designed and developed, as they are vital in this climate.

Passive cooling techniques should be continuously employed alongside new technologies to make homes "intelligent." Local pressure-laminated bamboo should be explored. For flooring and walls, different alternatives for concrete and cement should be introduced in the market. New plastics should also be formed for the building industry, and adapted to Philippine climate.

The new moderns will take shape, moving from the international style to the Philippine forefront, reflecting the Bauhaus traditions and yet addressing the Filipino's needs.

Ted Narciso, one of three partners in GF and Partners Architects

Clients: high-rise residential condominium buildings built for Ayala Land and Filinvest Land, commercial and corporate developments at The Fort.

Forecast: Design today is of "foremost simplicity"—without clutter and with a minimum of ornaments and moldings. He says: "The influence of Zen traditions will remain, as both Asians and non-Asians start to adhere to design principles of noble minimalism. Accents will center on the familiar and traditional; these will be spare and never too much."

Flexibility will center on the proper use of spaces, spurred by the concept that every nook has to be functional, every square meter should matter. Value for money will be the dominant principle for users, regardless of their income level.

Available materials will be limitless, with the exception of wood. Narciso advises that, in keeping with environmentalism, architects should not specify the use of narra unless it is old and recycled wood, to protect the species. Imported wood, competitive in price and largely from Indonesia, Malaysia and other neighboring countries, are finding their way into the local market. They could be used.

Narciso himself is partial to natural stones, locally available and in large supply, for accents and flooring. He says that *ara-al*, for one, is best when used plain and not rough-cut, because it has a sheen that imported slates do not have. Water elements, he adds, will be dominant features in homes, a touch that is "very Asian, even distinctly Filipino and truly tropical."

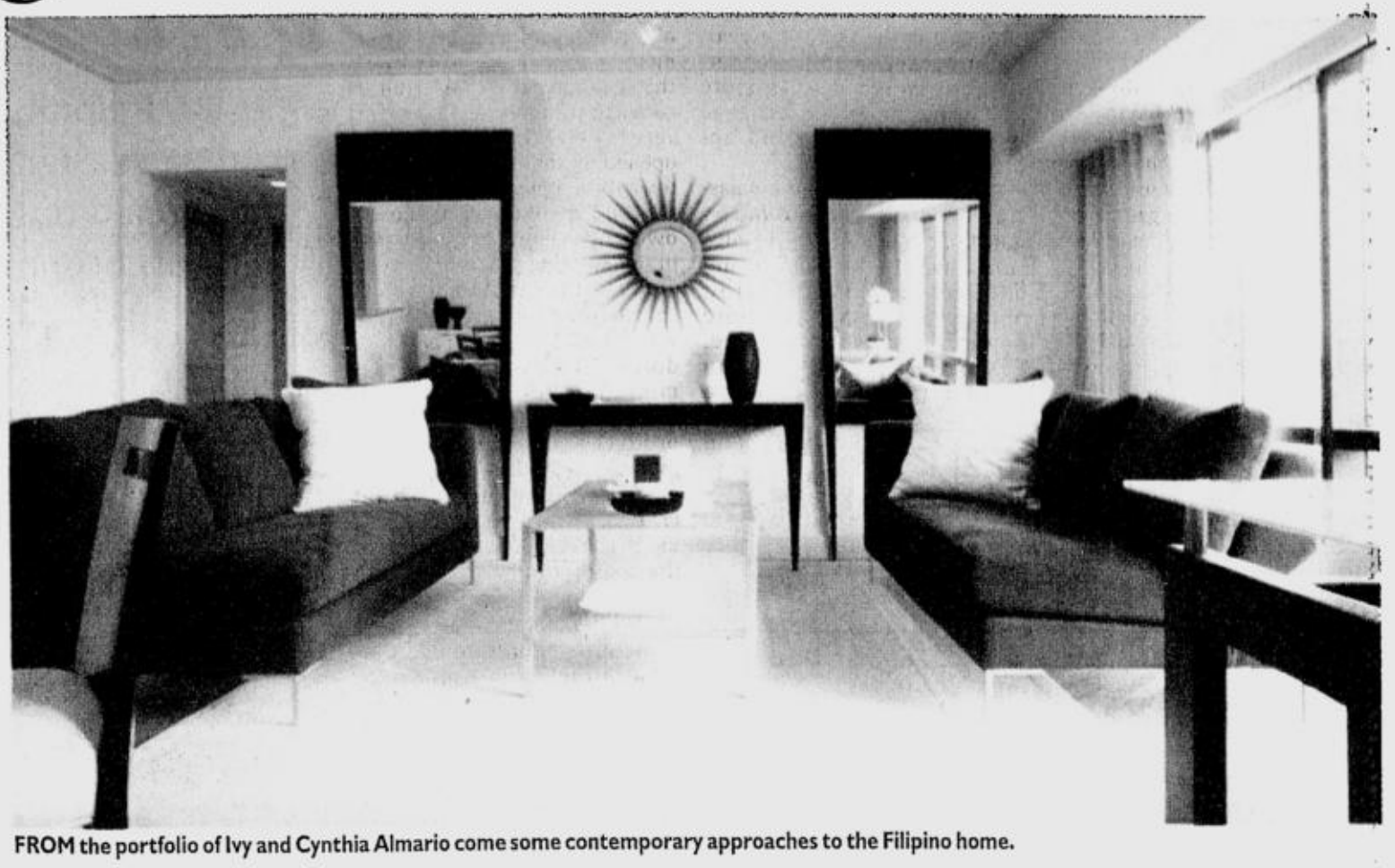
Gil Coscolluela, partner, Coscolluela and Associates

Clients: Ebisu, Shiraz, RCBC Plaza

Forecast: "Modern nostalgia" has emerged, with clean, simple and straightforward lines combined with traditional elements. Gil sees more openness in plans, with extra-spacious space and large windows that connect the outdoors with the interiors. He envisions leather as one material that could be tapped extensively for use in different areas of the home, not only on the walls but also in ceiling and floor designs, for added visual appreciation.

He favors earth tone shades, whites and black. "A certain class is achieved when black is used," he says. Gil also points to the combinations of stone, wood, glass, stainless steel and leather, to create interesting textures.

Ed Calma, Partner, Calma and Associates



FROM the portfolio of Ivy and Cynthia Almario come some contemporary approaches to the Filipino home.

MANNY Miñana, Ivy and Cynthia Almario

ED Ledesma

ANNA Sy

ANDY Locsin and Bong Recio

Clients: Landco building, private residences

Forecast: An advocate of the uncluttered look, Ed is known for visuals that are streamlined and geometric. He espouses the creation of more spaces that demand less from the users in terms of maintenance, choosing to create homes that mark depth and individuality through combinations of glass, lightly stained *almasiga* and elements of steel and concrete. He believes that the Filipino home will evolve into a new classic—one that combines gracious, traditional elements into defined clusters, with the majority of spaces being of the non-denominational, international style.

Ed also believes that more attention will go into the details, with doors and fine architectural elements, for example, taking on individual character. For those with the luxury of gardens, the lanai will constantly extend and be a part of both indoors and outdoors. He hopes to explore more possibilities in the arts and crafts, particularly with metal and stone.

Attaching a bold signature to his every work, Ed hopes that more homes will bear the merging of the dominantly traditional with new and exciting contemporary lines.

E-mail the author at cnolido@aimonline.org

DAN Lichauco

We can look forward to more interesting forms, colors and textures, as the consciousness for good design has gone upstream and downstream, beyond homes and gardens, from fine dining places to fast-food joints

ED CALMA'S TRADEMARK.
This 18-storey building in Davao, owned by Landco Pacific, was inspired by the streamlined look of an aircraft. It is characterized by curves on the roof and façade. The articulation on the façade expresses the functions inside the building such as the parking ramp.

Less work, more adventure

By Avie Gochoco-Perez
Contributor

DESIGNER for the Moderne home, Luis "Budji" Layug, has broken out of a low in his life. After a year of "just traveling, not knowing where it would lead," he discovered that, to get the best out of life, mind and heart have to work together.

This from one who, not so long ago, was known in his work circle to be "hard and not-so-feeling." Happily, he reports, he easily gets emotional these days.

While still to conquer the temper demons that now and again hound him, Budji speaks these days of heart, emotions, tamed passion, humility, relationships, blessings, intimate dinners and dancing, his 14-year-old adopted son David's going "downhill biking," of having to immediately say "sorry" to a victim of his temper because, otherwise, "I cannot live a minute longer, I cannot sleep."

Keen eye

The change tickles, even relieves, those around him. Not so long ago, Budji was "very uptight ...there was no room for mistake," says one who works with him closely. Today, his eye is still as quick to spot a mistake, and he is still very exacting in his standards, but, "let's have fun while we're doing this," is more like him now.

It is a bright, sunny Tuesday, 11 a.m. On the second floor of his home accessories shop named B at Home on Reposo street in Makati, Budji strides into his office. He smiles, almost shyly. He is in casuals—his shirt not quite pink and not quite peach, his pants white. Over the past year, he has lost 10 pounds through conscious dieting and Pilates, specifically shoulder-and-back exercises.

Obviously, the man is reinventing himself.

Almost at the end of the year-long low that saw him wondering if life was not much more than work, he gained a change in values, priorities and approach to life.

"At times, because of my passion for quality, I demand so much of my people," he begins. "I can be very critical. I would like to maintain my standards, but be less critical and more feeling for those around me. That is more important than work and design. I want to have an open heart." Then quickly, he adds, "I need more practice in giving and not expecting anything back."

> His eye is still as sharp, and his standards still as high, but interior designer Budji Layug is now able to say, "Let's have fun while we're doing this."

Discovering his style

In his work, the transformed Budji has discovered a desire for a "regional experience, an adventure." He is keeping his fingers crossed that this will lead to an Asean style in home interiors and spaces, maybe even a book that will spread the word on this new design leaning.

Budji says, "I discovered my style back in 1983 while helping with the home of the late engineer Rafael Zulueta in scenic Tagaytay. The Zulueta house overlooks Taal Lake and its famous volcano. I just worked with the structure. It was difficult to compete with the view. I worked very closely with the designer. I opened up the spaces. I rounded the curves. I just followed my instincts. I credit the design to the owner. The house became a part of my learning process."

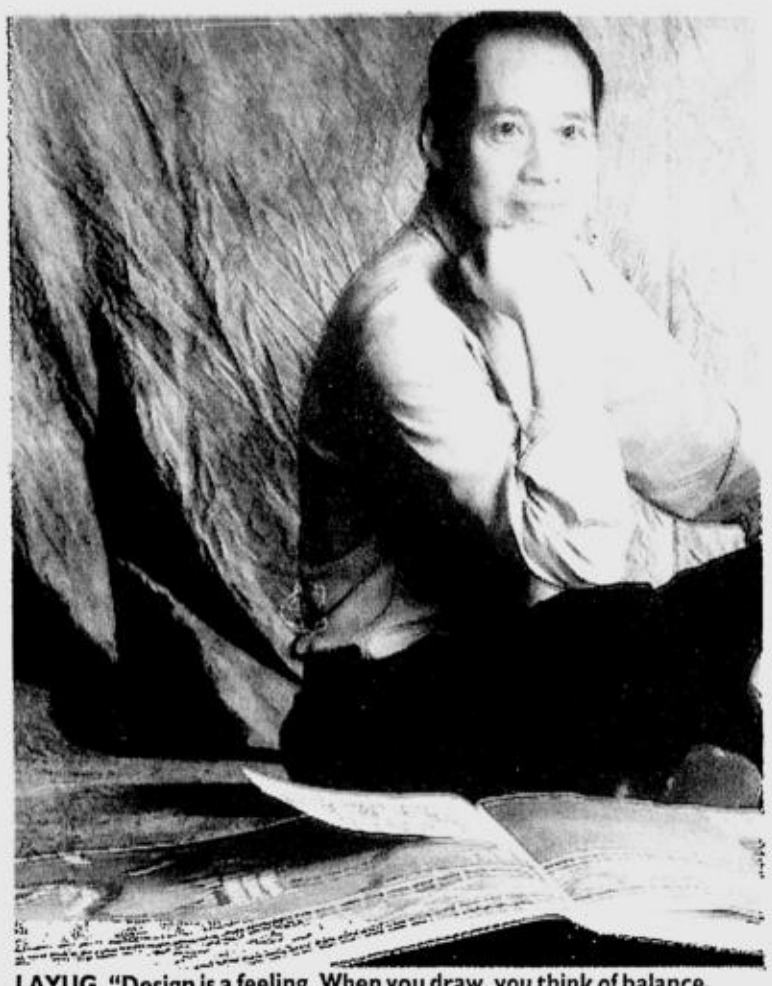
It was then that he realized, "purity of design and intention was the way to go." Today, after doing 10 homes, 10 condominium units, a resort in Boracay, exports, countless product designs and two self-owned showrooms, he wants to embrace the culture, arts and crafts, design leanings and unique materials of this side of the region, and create a truly Asean style.

"At this point in my life, I want to go regional instead of just insular. I want to have an adventure, a different experience. I want to express that which connects us all. You can mix cultures, materials [and] crafts into a contemporary approach to living, so that in the end, you don't say 'This is Filipino, Thai, Balinese.' You say, 'This is Asean.' "

Sleek spaces

Budji's living spaces today are, in his own words, "very contemporary, very *moderne*, very sleek" with a "natural feel." He sees a trend toward modernity that harks back to the '50s but with a "more sophisticated, more refined feel."

To an observer, a Budji Layug interior is cosmopolitan. The lines are clean. It is a composition of wood, glass, stone, stainless steel, tile, leather, bamboo, canvas and other natural materials in a studiedly casual setting. There is nothing for mere display. Flower vases in clear, geometric shapes contain only two or three long leaves, sometimes none at all. There is an unmistakable aura of sophistication, but nothing intimidates. There is sleekness, definitely, but there is also warmth in the wood, in the throw pillows plopped on the neutral canvas of the sofas.



LAYUG. "Design is a feeling. When you draw, you think of balance, color, shade, timelessness. Suddenly it takes form."

"I like a feeling of light coming in," he adds. "The reflection of light on a wall can change its color. And so I like painting walls off-white." He also shuns primary colors and "sweet" colors.

"Color can be stimulating but how long can you live with it?" he asks. "I like tones that veer toward sand. I like a certain kind of blue that is a product of lighting, not paint. I even like a certain kind of lilac in things that are movable. I like cool colors like gray-whites, gray-salmons."

When designing, Budji looks at the givens first: the architectural style, its location, the client's personality. Then he injects his own impressions. Sometimes this means even reorienting the house for a better view from within. The bigger the window to nature, the better. It can also entail tearing down walls or piercing them to let in light.

How do ideas come to him? Never while he sits at his desk, for sure. They come during travel, when he is in a "space where everything is stimulating."

Love for mom

Budji credits his mother Herminia Cancio-Layug for all—but all—that he has become today. He consults her on everything, and jests, "The umbilical cord hasn't been cut."

Says this son of "Mamang" who, back in the '50s, founded what is now the Philippine School of Interior Design: "We have a partnership. She's the more controlled person, more focused. She makes things work. I dream and she makes it real."

Budji's current work appears to pay particular attention to the kitchen.

The kitchen, he says, plays a very important part in entertaining. "Many people now love to cook, so you make the kitchen almost a part of the entertainment area in a condo or, in a home, almost like a breakfast area with room for entertainment. In a house, normally, I have the kitchen and the breakfast area overlooking or facing the garden."

He uses a lot of stainless steel in the service kitchen. For the main kitchen, he goes for a mix of wood, stainless steel, tiles, glass, closed and open shelves. "Definitely modern," he says. "A country kitchen should stay ... in the country."

Not into a decoration

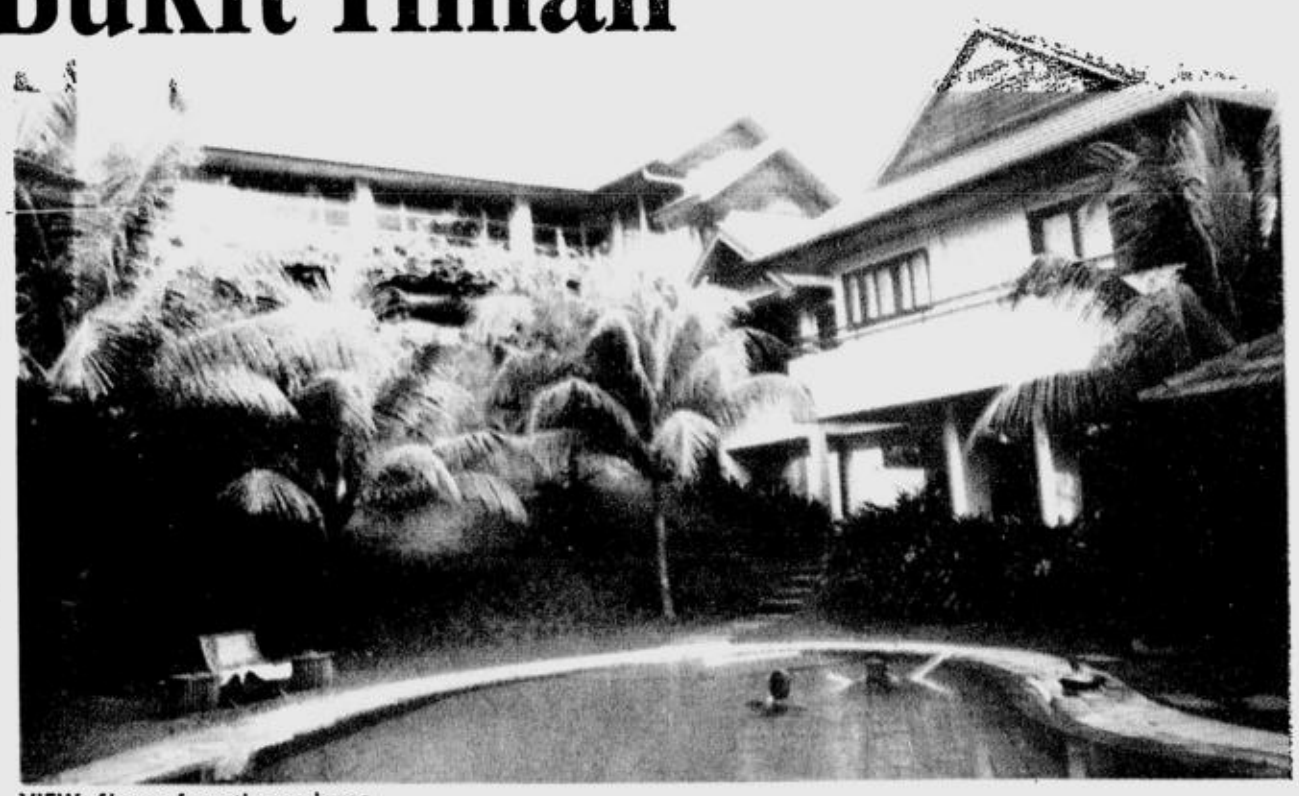
He was never one for decorative designing. "I don't like to see things for [mere] display. Something should be there because it has a function , or it means something."

At this stage of his life. Budji believes, "I am discovering myself, living and enjoying life, loving, family... facing myself and feeling good about it. I could do with less work. I need good experiences, a point of view to help me know what I want, and the confidence to express myself. As it is, I have been blessed. I have a feel for things that are good for living. This gives me so much pleasure and contentment."

A 'Budji' house in Bukit Timah

THE HOUSE in Bukit Timah, Singapore had gone under Luis "Budji" Layug's design eye and hand. When Kathy de Guzman was looking for a home in the island-state with banker-husband Bing, she didn't know that.

She saw the house and liked it instantly—all 1,200 sq. m. of it comprising the floor area, counting the covered areas. The main house, which flows down to a master pavilion and, further down, a guest pavilion, sprawls across 2,000 sq. m. of land. From street level, the land slopes downward so that the house overlooks a national park. Kathy's heart melted.



VIEW of house from the pool area.

GLASS sliding panels and high windows frame the landscape. High windows bring natural light into the house, giving a feeling of warmth. The openness of the design allows a smooth transition from the exterior into the interior.

KATHY de Guzman

> And how close friends found it without really trying

"Did you know that this is a Budji Layug house?" Kathy was asked.

"Her hair stood as my hair is standing now," Budji describes the moment. Kathy, Bing and Budji have been friends "from way back." Bing had earlier picked another house. "With European styling, moldings ...a colonial type of house," recalls Budji.

Today, not surprisingly, the de Guzmans live in the Bukit Thima house.

Budji, 10 years ago, met a Singaporean named Spencer Chan, who became his friend. The Singaporean was building a house, and had had an architect draw up the structure. He asked Budji to "style it from ground up."

Budji relates: "When I looked at the plan and location, I saw that the house was oriented towards the left. When I looked to the left, I saw houses. To the right, I saw a park. I said the house should face the park. It is a national park and it is such a luxury to look at. You don't feel like you're in (the concrete jungle that is) Singapore."

The re-orientation done, Budji went to work.

He chose teakwood from Burma for much of the wood in the house: flooring, ceiling, even the eaves. "Teakwood weathers well," he says.

Budji also opened up the spaces, letting the outdoors in. No aluminum screens were allowed to stand between the indoor and outdoor spaces. Only the bedrooms were protected by screens from insects.

"The house is very casual," Budji says. The aim is comfort and enjoyment for all who stay or visit.

Because the street is higher than the lot, one comes in from the driveway, down to the second level of the main house where the bedrooms are. Visitors go down a circular staircase from this level to reach a foyer, and then the living room. The dining room is also in this main house.

"Everything opens up," he says, noting that in the living room, two sides are "see-through." Wood-framed glass sliding doors invite the greenery and the sunshine in.

From the living room, a bridge connects the main house to the masters' pavilion which is home to a small bedroom. Underneath the masters' pavilion is a lanai from where, going down a few steps, one reaches the guest pavilion.

In all these areas, Budji's "contemporary" styling is evident. With travel, he says, one ceases being "too ethnic." He points to a composition of objects in the house made up of an exotic painting above a small, circular table that is traditional Balinese. A vase from another Asean country sits on the floor to round up the composition.

Budji likes to mix and match such objects for an effect calculated to blur restrictive individual styles and, instead, highlight a look that he hopes will henceforth be identified with one unified region. He already has a name for it: "Asean Style." —***Avie Gochoco-Perez***

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ATTY. Chel Katigbak, Chona Mercado, Marvie Cojuangco Yulo.

DANCERS Sonny Tanchangco, Mari Burao and John Gaddi

PR director Milen Treichler, F&B diretor Erich Kaiserseder, Frannie and Ramon Jacinto.

Ballroom dancing at Edsa Shangri-La

By Becky Garcia

THE EDSA Shangri-La Hotel recently launched the Wednesday ballroom dancing at Gillespie's. With the huge turnout of ballroom dancing enthusiasts, there's no doubt, dancing is here to stay.

Welcoming guests as early as 7 p.m. were the Edsa working team led by the general manager, **Jarlath Lynch**, and food and beverage director **Erich Kaiserseder** (both took to the dance floor with some guests to break the ice), marketing director **Gigi Porter** and communications director **Milen Treichler**.

Enthusiasts who welcomed the opening of a new venue were **Marvie Cojuangco Yulo, Atty. Chel Katigbak**, ballroom patronesses **Nanette Mendoza** and **Giging Garcia, Tonet** and **Linda Lagdameo, Judith Soriano, Chona Mercado, Benny Lao, Glo Alcala, Maribel Dario, Violy Lim, Elena Lee, Emma Nieto** and **Del Gonzaga**. All the top ballroom dance instructors and dancesport competitors were in attendance.

Others seen were **Ramon** and **Frannie Jacinto, Jojo Zabarte, Paqui** and **Lillibeth Campos, Nini Pinlac** with **Dan Legaspi, Yolly Ayson, Marissa Fenton**, Heritage Hotel's **Geena Zablan**, French Embasssy First Secretary **Martine Vasseur**, BNP's **Pierre Imhof**, Alliance Francaise teachers **Janine Audrain** and **Martin Yap**, the dancing French Trade Commissioner **Jean Philippe Quercy**.

BECKY Garcia with Jarlath Lynch

Spotted were **Thelina Nuval, Mary Grace Katigbak**, Kaya's **Kathy Park** with **Jess Sarmiento** and **Ogie Reloj**. The highlight was a mini show of dance champions led by **Bong Marquez** and **Belinda Adora, Ann** and **Jerswin Poloyapoy** together with kiddie champions **Reynier Mercado** and **Judith Melencio, Erolle Melencio** and **Krystel Tadeo**, pre-am top couples **Mike Gualvez** and **Carol Bacera, Miguel dela Serna** and **Shirley Basan** and the Seis Marias of **Aris Martirez** who did the swing. The ballroom regulars will surely look forward to Wednesday when they can dance till 2 a.m.

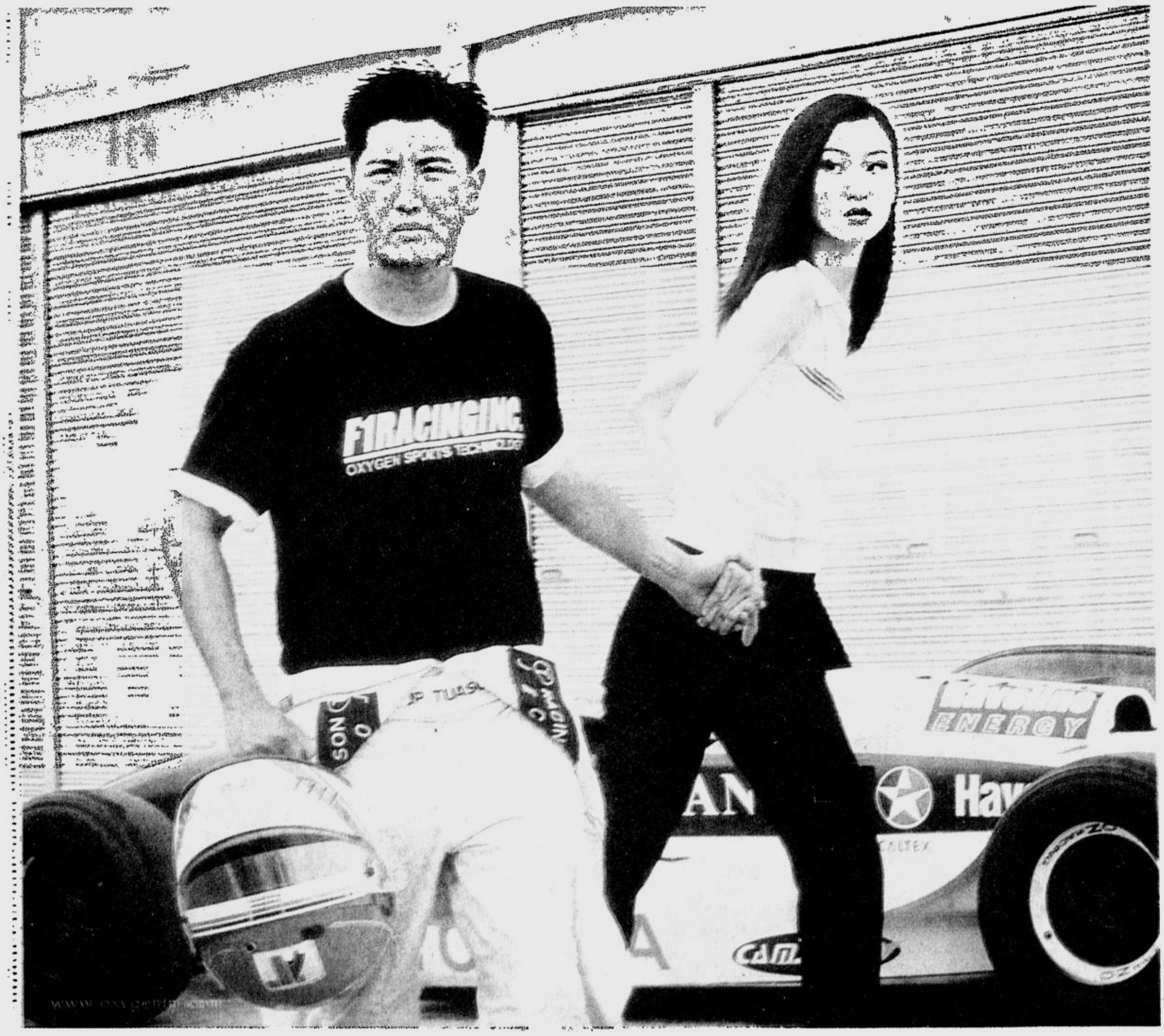
Meanwhile, ballroom dancing is also very much alive in Baguio. The North Quad Dance Instructors Association, Inc. composed of dance instructors and enthusiasts from Baguio, La Union, Tarlac, Cabanatuan, Pangasinan, Pampanga, Vigan and Laoag were inducted recently during the Flower Festival in Baguio. Heading it as president are **Major Manny de Leon**, an active military man in Baguio who is a good dancer together with dancesport competitor **Zen Rouzie** as the coordinating officer. The other officers are **Cocoy Belsa, Riza Castro, Dondon Estoy, Virgie Watson** and **Rambert Bruan**.

While in Baguio, we stayed at the Manor Hotel, a beautiful place to stay at in Camp John Hay. A plus to the place is the Le Soufflé Restaurant of **Chef Billy King** whose reputation for excellent food and service extend to this restaurant in Baguio. We enjoyed sipping cocktails beside the fireplace with a pianist playing mood music. As soon as we checked in, we were welcomed by two trays of cocktail canapés of salmon, cheese, carpaccio and a variety of black and white chocolates prepared by **Chef Mike Philips**. We immediately felt at home.

BECKY Garcia, French Trade Commissioner Jean Philippe Quercy, Marissa Fenton, Yoli Ayson, Lillibeth and Paqui Campos.

We also saw a lot of Manila friends either staying or dining at the hotel—**Bobong Velez** and **Maricor Nieto, Ian** and **Marissa Fenton, Yolly** and **Serge Ayson, Lillibeth** and **Paqui Campos, Joanne Matschuck**. Actor **Bong Revilla** was there, too. We were invited to dinner at the Chairman's Villa by **Gov. Chavit Singson**. Welcoming us were lovely **Che, Vivian Velez, Anna Marin** and **Jing Espiritu**, restaurateur **Jack** and **Sonia Rodriguez**. Also at dinner were **Korina Sanchez** and **Paul Aquino, Cynthia Reyes** and **Donnie Ramirez** and **James Lau**, owner of Club Panoly in Boracay.

AT THE Chairman's Villa, Camp John Hay with Gov. Chavit Singson



The 34TH Annual Golden Tee

MARIO Bautista, Louie Jalandoni, Joey Yujuico

AIDA Almeda Lopez, Milette Ocampo, Noreen Trota

CHARLIE and Chinit Tuason

Photos By Betoy Johnson

IT IS this event, eagerly awaited by the members and sought after by their guests, which set the trend for other golf clubs to follow. For after all, **Manila Golf**'s membership roster reads like who's who in both the business and social circles. Among this year's participants in this four-day tournament were bankers **OV Espiritu, Sonny Vistan, Eddie Go, Bill Go, Gigi Montinola** and Central Bank Governor himself, **Paeng Buenaventura.** Legal luminaries led by former Vice President **Doy Laurel, Manoling Chan, Boy Feria, Ave Cruz,** prominent doctors **Jorge Garcia, Mike Celdran, George Neri, Manny Hechanova** joined high-profile businessmen and ex-Cabinet men **Roy Navarro, Peter Garrucho** and **Bobby de Ocampo** in this highly competitive tournament. Also visible were food magnates **George Yang** of McDonald's and Seattle's Best **Bernardine Siy** with P&G's **Johnip Cua** and Shell's **Oscar Reyes.**

Golf lovers present were the **Rufino** and **Prieto** clans with INQUIRER's energetic **Sandy Prieto Romualdez** taking the ladies top prize for the nth time. Other golfing families who participated were the **Tuason** brothers **Emilio** and **Conkoy** and their younger cousins **Nick** and **Jinky;** the **Cacho** cousins, and the **Cojuangcos.**

The awards night, the highlight of the affair, was well attended. A sumptuous buffet was laid out in the club's verandah with dance music from Nonoy Lopez' band enlivening the evening. Adding glamour to the affair were the fashionable "golf widows" **Madeleine Lim, Zita Feliciano, Doody Tuason** as well as golfing wives **Esther Sallee, Melissa Aboitiz, Isa Velayo, Remy Romero Salas** . This year's tournament committee was headed by **Mike Celdran** ably assisted by the members of the Ladies branch. Club President **Rudy Cuenca** made sure that everything ran smoothly. Among the great prizes raffled off was a roundtrip ticket for two to the US, courtesy of Northwest Airlines.

More than the trophies and the prizes at stake, the camaraderie, the lasting friendships and the business partnerships developed over the years are cherished by the longtime members, some of whom have never missed a **Golden Tee** in all its 34 years!

ZITA Feliciano and Doody Tuason

BOLING T. Reyes

ALEX Prieto

EMILIO Tuason and Rica Theo

PL and Madeleine Lim

Fay Chan and Crispy Santamaria Laurel

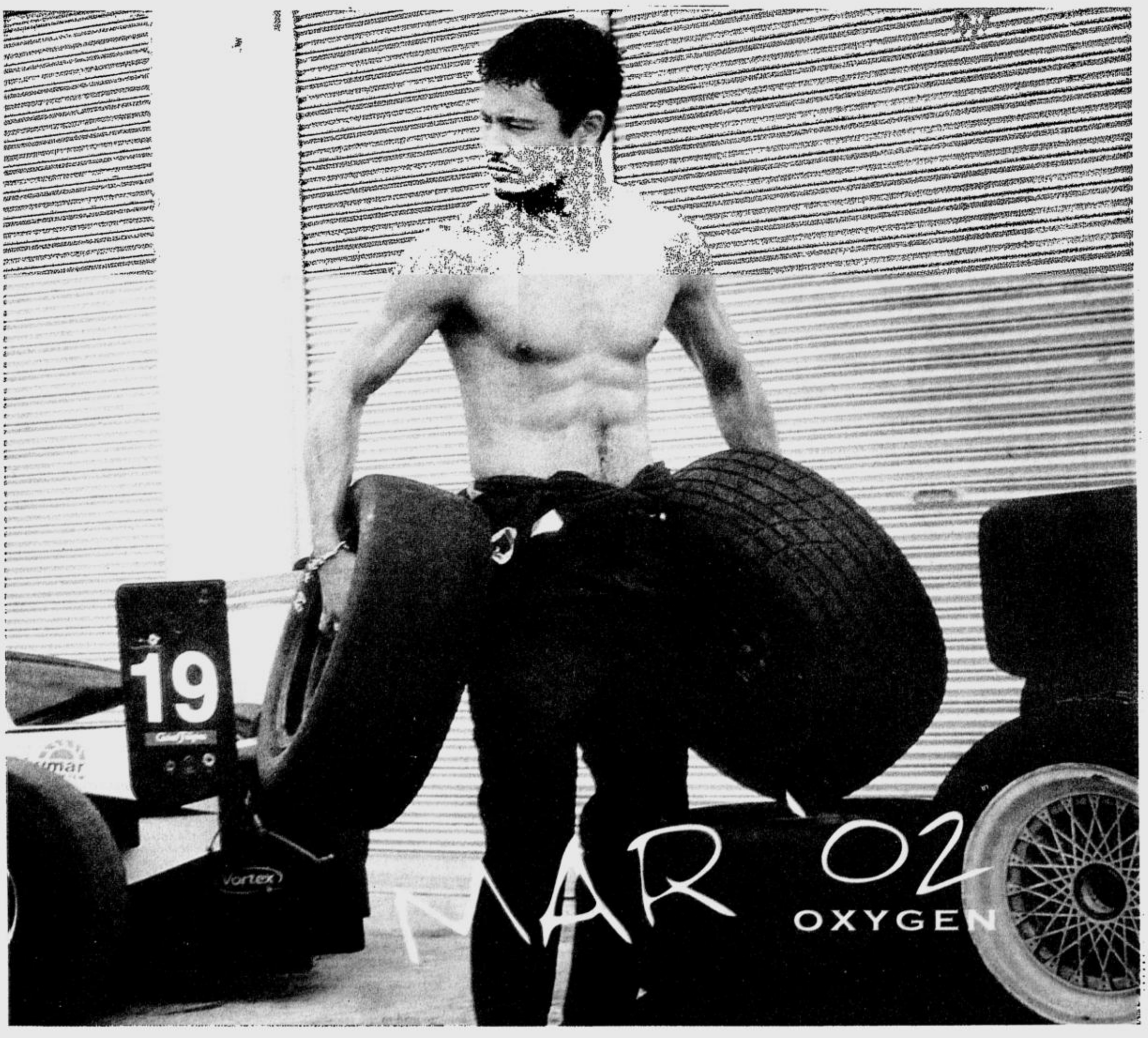
GEORGE Yang and Kristine Yang

MILETTE Ocampo, Aida and Jake Almeda Lopez

RICHIE and Giging Garcia, Jinky Tuason, Jojo nad Pin Guingona

Sonny Vistan, Dr. Jorge Garcia, OV Espiritu

MIGUEL Celdran, Mike Celdran, Anton Cacho, Cesar Buenaventura

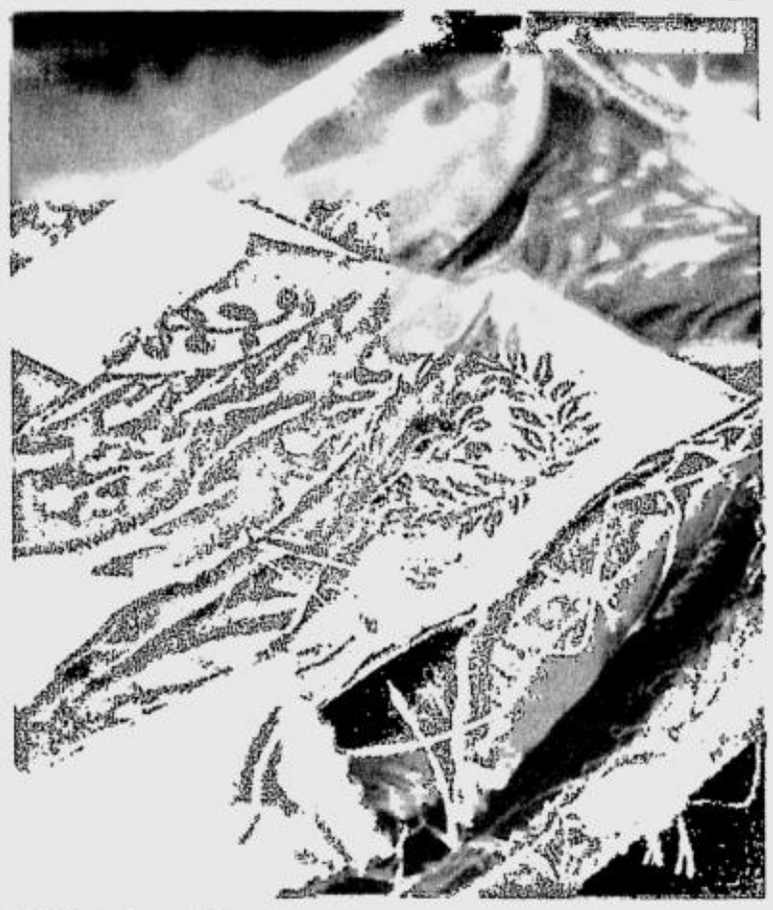


A girl's guide to hunting and gathering

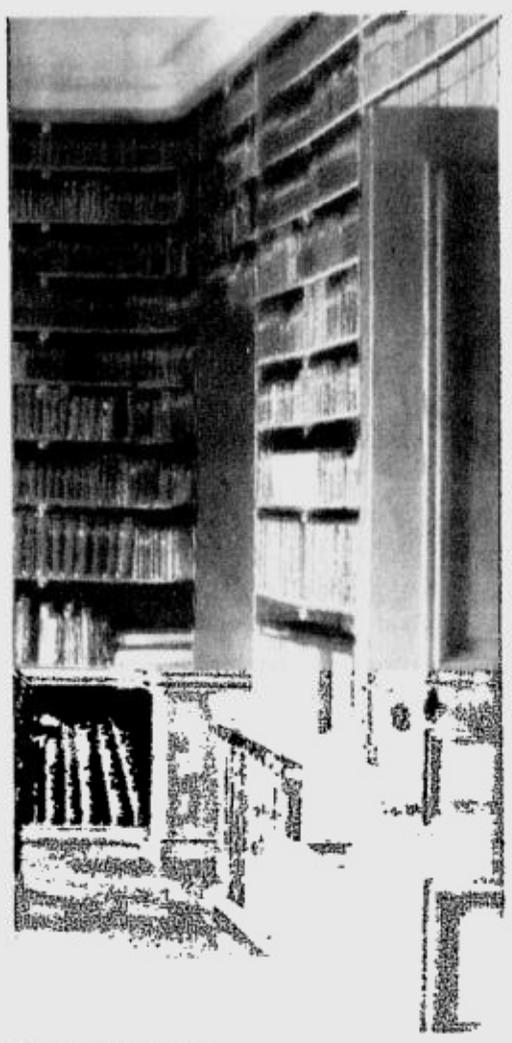
By Bea P. Valdes
Contributor

TRANSFORMATION of house into home happens when one takes a little more time indulging in creature comforts.

1. Trip the light fantastic.
Search for unusual sizes and shapes for your accent lighting. You can find them in swirling crystal or painted silk lanterns. Illumination by Candles is still the most flattering.
Murano Lamp vases by Donghia can be ordered from Artemis. Fortuny lamps, from Arrakis Oggetti. Candle selection available at Cireo.



7. Curtain calling.
From damasks to prints, cotton to silk, indulge in dramatic drapery. If Maria tries to dress the children in these, the decorator won't find it too charming. An array of fabrics to choose from, available at Elements.



8. Storytelling.
Cultivate a library. Have an area filled with savored readings, a place for passion with favorite authors. There's nothing like being surrounded by friends.

2. Go to market.
Flea markets, that is. There's nothing like scouring second-hand shops for unique treasures. Bounty is in the hand of the beholder. Go for broke in Bangkal or Casa Tesoro.

3. Return to the native.
Satisfy the craving for Mastercraft. Hunt down laminated bamboo shelves, woven sea grass tables, Asian accents that have a modern polish. You can find an impressive collection from B at Home and at Padua.

4. That's a wrap!
Indulge in wraps, luxurious throws and fringed cushions, the better to curl up in comfort.

5. Get graphic.
Invest in high-octane prints. Think bold and beautiful. Check out the Cuba cloth flanking the display at Firma.

6. Fly first glass.
Splurge on crystal. After this comes the clinking of champagne wishes and caviar dreams, leaving the lifestyle of the rich and infamous not far behind.

Don'ts
There are no steadfast rules in designing or decorating. But then again, maybe there should be.
Remember to:
• Evade taxidermy (see right photo).
Here's a simple tip: zebra print: good. whole zebra: bad.
• Ditch the waterbed.
Beyond abbreviating or editing, there is a favorable ruling for the divorce of certain design elements. Unless you're in Vegas, swimming pool and bed is an unholy matrimony.
• Please unwrap your sofa.
Leaving the plastic cover on your couch will leave you in a class all your own.
Then there is the eternal conundrum. Which, in designing circles, is: how does one place a television set in a functional but non-prominent place? In some Filipino households—at least in mine—the last question is about an unavoidable feast. How does one properly display a two-foot replica of the "Last Supper?"

ANIMAL skin is not always politically correct

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HIGH LIVING. A typical building in Peninsula de Punta Fuego's offers a breathtaking view of nature. A series of balconies is built atop a stretch of open-air patio to achieve an understated yet elegant loo

By Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Bobot Meru

IMAGINE spending your weekends in a beachfront hideaway where the air is fresh and tangy, the water deep blue and still. The paved streets are spotless and the houses, Spanish Mediterranean-inspired with shingled roofs, tall and imposing. Twenty-first century amenities meld with the genteel atmosphere of an era gone by. In short, a pristine world far removed from images of squalor and urban blight so common in Metro Manila.

The country's rich and accomplished can't seem to get enough of Peninsula de Punta Fuego, so that Landco, the developer behind the gated community in Nasugbu, Batangas, has started developing a nearby beachfront property called Terrazas de Punta Fuego.

Landco and Roxaco are jointly developing the 40-hectare property owned by the Pedrozas. Terrazas will follow the same formula that made Peninsula such a resounding success: a secluded paradise for an upscale, decidedly older set who has earned not only fame and fortune, but their peers' respect as well. Big-time tax evaders, drug and gambling lords need not apply. A screening committee blocks applications of anyone it deems undesirable.

Best beach

The developers are maximizing the Terrazas' unique topography, working around its lush, sloping landscape, and long stretch of white sand beach. Unlike the Peninsula, which is blessed with numerous coves, the Terrazas only boasts of one beach. "But it's the best swimming beach in Batangas," says Pat Villano, vice president of Punta Fuego. "That's why we've been attracting the same upscale market."

Now that almost every parcel of land in the 80-hectare Peninsula is taken, not a few landowners have started acquiring their second, even third, properties at the Terrazas. Many are taking advantage of "ground-level" prices to snap up prime spots. Land prices at Terrazas, for instance, range from P9,000 to P10,000 per square meter. Land at the fully developed Peninsula now costs somewhere between P12,000 and P15,000. Investing in the future, however, is not what they have in mind.

"Many have found Punta Fuego an ideal place to build their second homes," says Villano. "They've made it their weekend retreat from Metro Manila, even turning those dream homes into repositories of antique and heirloom pieces and souvenirs they've collected from their travels abroad."

A number of houses were bought with the homeowners' life savings. Wanting to share their retirement homes with friends and loved ones, many have built palatial structures twice the size of those found in Forbes Park, Ayala Alabang and other exclusive villages. A four-storey, white house with blue-tiled roofs, for instance, has an elevator and is fully air-conditioned. Several homeowners, however, have built terraces or balconies on every floor to fully enjoy the sea breeze. All houses overlook the sea, with a number of them straddling the peninsula's hilly contours.

> Another secluded paradise for an upscale, older set who has earned fame, fortune and their peers' respect. Big-time tax evaders, drug and gambling lords are not welcome

Every homeowner had to get the developer's approval before building, although architects were given room to come up with their own interpretations of Spanish Mediterranean. Despite certain restrictions, several homeowners came up with stylized and Greek-inspired versions. Well, at least they're still Mediterranean.

"In keeping with the Terrazas' terrain," says Villano, "landowners will be required to build their homes based on a fusion of Spanish and Asian architectures."

Spanish architecture

Landco's penchant for Spanish designs is perhaps a tribute to the Roxases' heritage, the landed Spanish-Filipino clan that owns vast tracts of land planted to sugar in Nasugbu, including the now-developed Peninsula. In fact, a cluster of houses along the Peninsula's coast belongs to several affluent Spanish-Filipino families.

One of the property's primary come-ons, of course, is its pristine yet accessible location. It's less than three hours by car and 15 minutes by helicopter from Metro Manila, and a few kilometers from upscale Tali Beach. Except for a short stretch of rough road leading to the property, all major arteries leading to Nasugbu are well-paved. A network of concrete roads links the community.

The property faces the South China Sea, not historic but now-polluted Manila Bay. Aside from a sugar central several kilometers away, says Villano, there are no factories in the area to defile the surroundings.

The type of amenities was among Landco's first considerations while developing the Peninsula. Bowling lanes, video arcades, karaoke bars, shopping malls and dance halls were definitely out. "People have had enough of these," says Villano of such urban "landmarks." He adds, "Punta Fuego isn't the first place to go to for artificial stimulation. There's more to life than weekends at the mall."

Instead, the developer maximized the area's natural surroundings by adding in such amenities as a health club, golf course, spa, mini theater and several specialty restaurants, some with awesome vistas of the sea. As if the numerous coves and beaches weren't enough, Landco has built several so-called infinity pools and outdoor jacuzzis facing the sea. An area has been reserved as a dock for homeowners with boats.

Self-contained

The self-contained community has almost everything, including a semi open-air chapel. The only thing missing is a wet market. Before homeowners descend on Punta Fuego, not a few load their SUVs and mini vans (the latest models, of course) with groceries and foodstuff for a weekend or longer. A battalion of household help—from maids, cooks to nannies—join their employers every time they visit. Almost all homeowners employ a male *katiwala* to look after the place, clean the house and do the garden while they're away.

But why bother to transport the Ayala-Alabang lifestyle to such a remote place? "Despite the serenity the place offers," says Villano, "they don't want to part with the creature comforts of the city; that's why they've transplanted such amenities here. For our part, we try to make the surroundings as pristine and lush as possible."

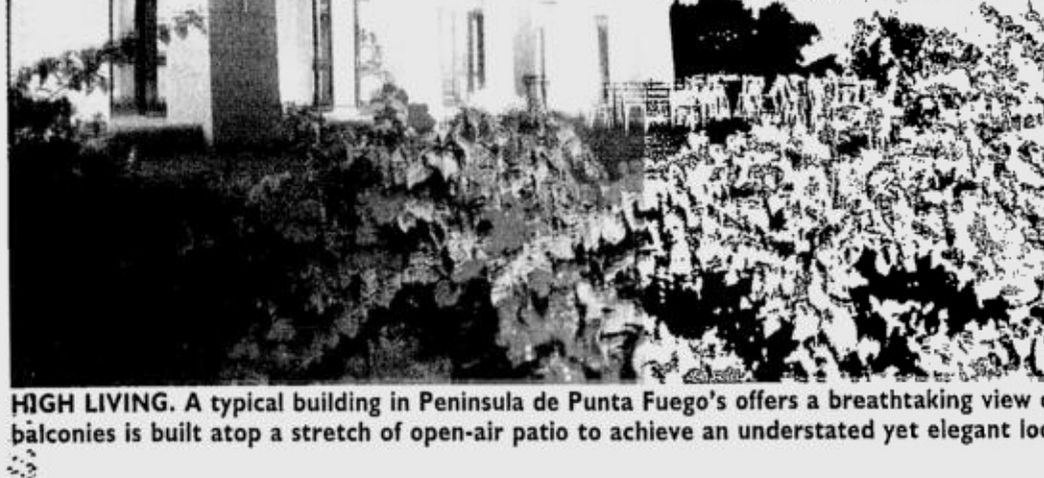
Trees and a host of garden plants blanket most of the 88-hectare property, but because of the dry air and sandy soil, they're not as lush as the plants in the Terrazas.

One need not own a house and lot to become a club member, and money doesn't necessarily guarantee entry. In keeping with its image, a committee screens would-be club members before they're accepted. Not all homeowners (those who've acquired their properties from previous homeowners) are entitled to the club's amenities as well.

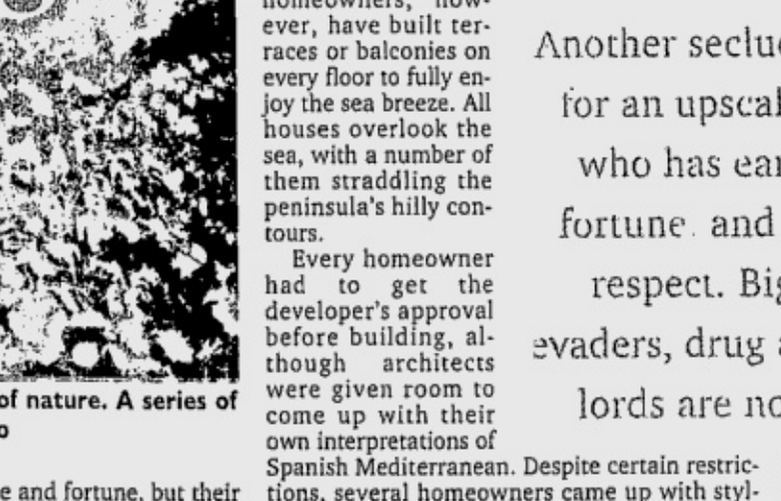
Despite the thought that went into the Peninsula's development, Landco has vowed not to commit the same "mistakes" again as it begins working on the Terrazas. For one, it will devote more areas for outdoor facilities.

"We've reversed the equation," says Villano, "by maximizing the Terrazas' outdoor forest cover. We will devote 70 percent of our resources to outdoor attractions instead of doing it the other way around."

The clubhouse, for instance, will be built above the beach and connected to a series of boardwalks that will snake around decades-old trees. Each boardwalk will host several cabanas where families can hold picnics, swap stories or play mahjong into the night. A charmed life, indeed!



SUBURBIA BY THE BEACH. The Spanish-Mediterranean theme is reflected in houses with shingled roofs, thick walls and multi-level balconies that open into the sea.



A SERIES of landscaped steps seems to lead to the sea.

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A showcase of privilege, a fortress of privacy

By Teddy Y. Montelibano
Contributor
Photos by Chito Vecina
Visual concept by Albert Avellana

"IT'S the only club of its kind in Manila."

Thus the newly opened, very exclusive Tower Club is described by one of its members, Philam Life Insurance chair and Senior Presidential Adviser on International Competitiveness, **Roberto R. Romulo**

The club, which occupies the 33rd and 34th floors of the Philamlife Tower along Paseo de Roxas Avenue in Makati City, is a showcase of privilege and understated luxury, and a fortress of privacy for the members. On the 33rd floor are Taipan, a Chinese restaurant, and the Continental, for Western fine dining. The Continental, with its wall-to-wall panoramic glass casing, offers a stellar view of the city.

Also on the 33rd floor is the Board Room, whose main feature is a Swarovski crystal chandelier hovering above a long conference table of rich wood that seats 16. Nearby are two private function rooms—the Pinot, which seats 12; and the fabulous 20-person Murano Room, with Italian silk-upholstered seats, a silver-finished door, Murano glass panels and velvet-on-wood walls, and another crystal Swarowski chandelier.

Cocktails

We hear **Romulo** muttering that the Murano room is not exactly to his taste. Plus, he is a little dismayed that the dinner for former Philippine envoy to Japan, **Ramon del Rosario Sr.** and his wife is about to be held there.

The meeting with **Romulo** has been arranged for Élan by that raconteur nonpareil **Johnny Litton**, Tower Club's media consultant. We sink into plush leather couches and start sipping cocktails at the Baron's Bar, likewise on the 33rd floor. (Right next to it is the smallish Havana Room or Cigar Room, which some members refer to as the most exclusive room of all, as it seats only 11 and is the only area where cigar or cigarette smoking is allowed.)

The conversation is peppered with **Mr. Litton**'s unceasing witticisms. **Romulo** expresses the main reasons that he approves of a place like the Tower Club: "You don't have to wait for a table. You walk in and you know people with whom you can exchange views, because you are more or less be of the same mindset and/or preoccupation. That's the essence of a club. It's even better because it's not just a men's club; we have lady members."

In fact, two women—Social Security System President **Cora de la Paz** and shipping executive **Doris Magsaysay-Ho**—are in the club's Founding Board of Governors, which consists of 34 leaders of the business community. **Maurice Greenberg**, founder of the American International Group (or AIG, to which Philam and Philam Life Insurance belong) is honorary chair. **Washington Sycip** is chair, and **Jose Cuisia Jr.**, president and CEO of Philamlife Insurance, is vice chair. Also in the board are the **Zobel de Ayala** brothers **Jaime Augusto** and **Fernando,** Roberto Romulo and his brother, lawyer **Ricardo Romulo**, and **Oscar Lopez**, among others.

Our host stresses, "It is fair to say that this club is made up of opinion leaders, as opposed to merely the rich and famous. In other words, you do not have to be a multi-millionaire (to be a member)." He chuckles, "You do have to be opinionated, obviously."

Convergence

It may be a bit self-conscious of **Romulo** to underline that there is something more substantial about the members than being just multimillionaires. As the evening progresses, it becomes apparent that the people gathering at the Murano Room to fete Mr. and Mrs. Ramon del Rosario are, precisely, a fair sampling of the country's rich and very very rich. To start with: Philippine Ambassador to the Court of St. James, **Chuching Tambunting**; **Mr.** and **Mrs. Jose Cuisia**, **Oscar Hilado, Chito Madrigal** and **Manuel Collantes,** both **Romulo** brothers and their wives.

They are just some of the people that **Romulo** refers, to when he says, "Nine out of 10 times, you have someone to talk to as soon as you walk in." It's not like stepping into a hotel where, he says, "You see people you know, but don't want to talk to." Worse, he adds, "If, say, you are in public office, someone may just come up and insult you because you did something he didn't like."

Privacy and the assurance that a member is not unnecessarily bothered, is a guaranteed attachment to Tower Club membership, one being decidedly among one's kind.

Dining in style

Another guarantee is the pleasure of dining in style, at the Taipan or the Continental. The selection of flatware, crystal and china is meticulous, complementing exquisite dimsum and other delicious Oriental cuisine from **Chef Cheong's** kitchen, or superbly concocted, Italian-inspired creations that are the handiwork of the extremely talented *sous* chef **Martin Finch**.

Litton says, not only is the food excellent; a comparative research into restaurant food prices in Metro Manila shows it is at least 20 percent cheaper. "For instance," he says, "a good prime rib at the Prince Albert Rotisserie (of the Intercontinental Manila) costs well over a thousand pesos. That's versus a little less than P700 at the Continental. Quality is at par, if not better." On weekends, the Taipan likewise offers members and guests a sumptuous buffet at an unbelievable price of P395!

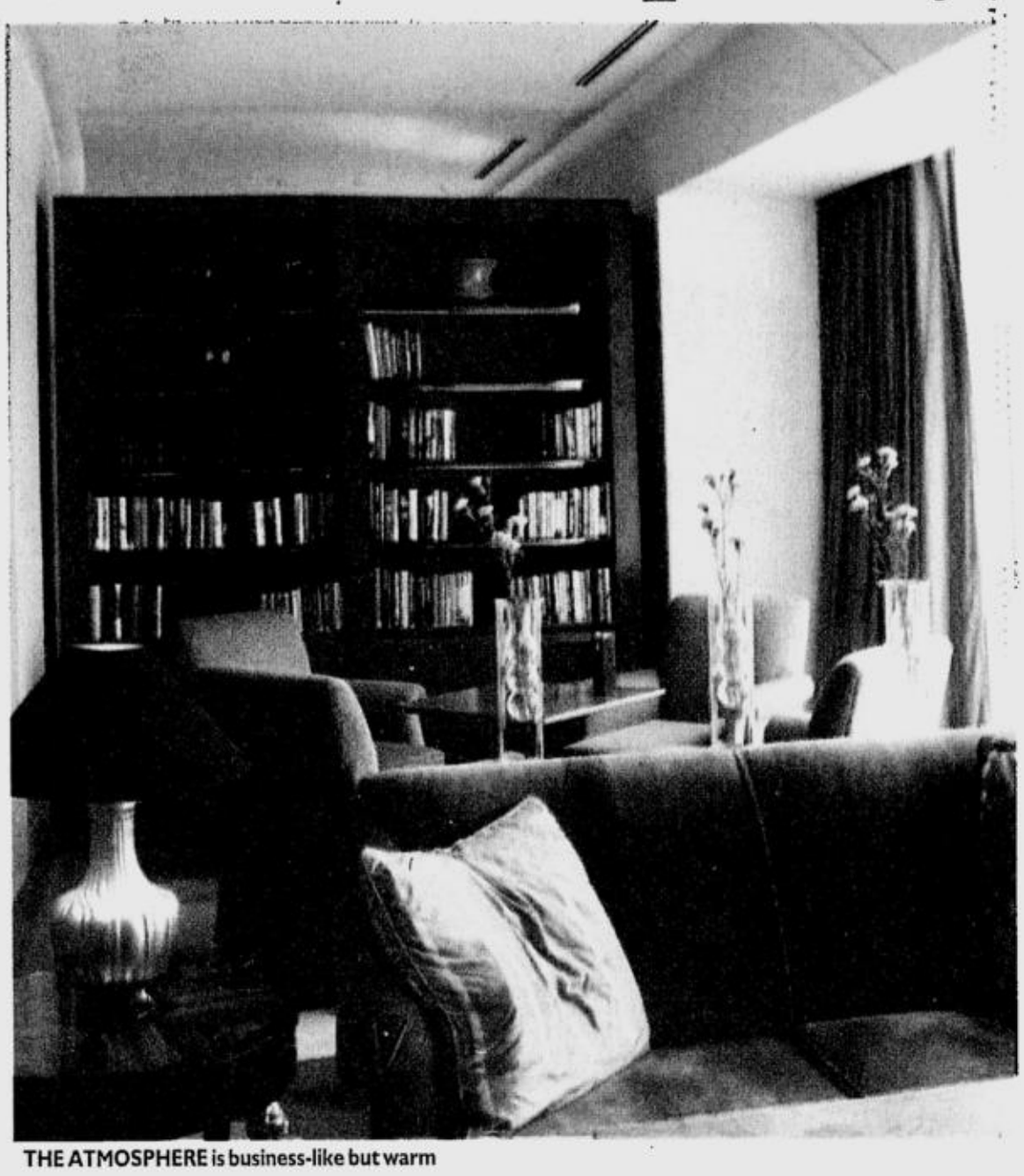
The Taipan is the favorite of the Club's younger members, like 40-something Trade and Industry Secretary, **Manuel Araneta Roxas II,** and former private multinational banker and now Finance Secretary **Jose Isidro Camacho** as well as **Marivic Madrigal Vasquez**. Even celebrity matrons like **Imelda Ongsiako Cojuangco**, recently the honoree in a 180-person Friends of CCP party at the restaurant, like the place as well. In fact, she is set to host a party here for 60, for Fashion Czar **Pitoy Moreno**.

International network

The personalities that consists the Tower Club's Founding Board of Governors ensure the careful selection of new members. There is a membership committee whose composition is known only to the founders. Membership is by invitation only.

Needless to say, a plethora of privileges awaits the select few. The Club is owned by Philam Properties which is fully owned, in turn, by the Philippine American Life and General Insurance Company, the country's largest and most respected insurer. Philam is, as earlier mentioned, a part of AIG, the leading US-based international insurance organization and largest underwriter of commercial and industrial insurance in the United States.

After conducting a search for private managers, the Club owners concluded an arrangement with the prestigious Clubs Corporation of Asia (CCA) International. Based in Hong Kong and the United Kingdom, CCA is a leading leisure company that develops and manages golf resorts, city, country, athletic clubs and hotels and resorts in Asia and Europe. It owns and operates over 30 clubs and hotels.



THE ATMOSPHERE is business-like but warm

> Tower Club redefines *exclusive*: 'You walk in and you know people with whom you can exchange views, because you are of the same. That's the essence of a club'

The real boon to being allowed entry into Tower Club is access to over 200 city, golf, athletic, and country clubs worldwide in alliance with the International Associate Clubs (IAC). These clubs include the ultra-luxurious 600-acre Brocket Hall estate. Twenty miles from the center of London, in Welwyn, Hertfordshire, the 46-room Brocket Hall was built in 1760 by **Sir Matthew Lamb**, to the design of renowned architect **James Paine**. Today, owned and operated by CCA, it is England's finest golf and residential venue, with two championship golf courses and The Golf Academy, which is located beside the River.

Soft opening

Access to such private clubs are very convenient for men like Roberto **Romulo**, who frequently travel and have specific requirements for entertaining friends and associates.

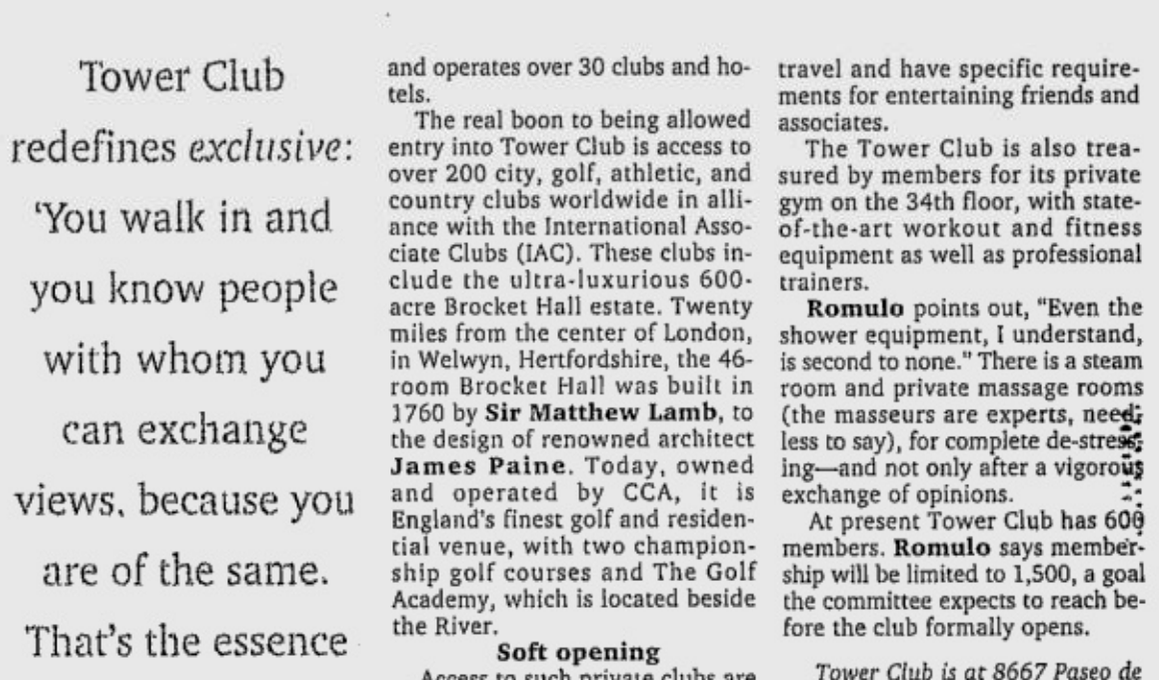
The Tower Club is also treasured by members for its private gym on the 34th floor, with state-of-the-art workout and fitness equipment as well as professional trainers.

Romulo points out, "Even the shower equipment, I understand, is second to none." There is a steam room and private massage rooms (the masseurs are experts, need less to say), for complete de-stressing—and not only after a vigorous exchange of opinions.

At present Tower Club has 600 members. **Romulo** says membership will be limited to 1,500, a goal the committee expects to reach before the club formally opens.

Tower Club is at 8667 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City, Philippines. Tel. No. 8857085

BARON'S Bar for power cocktails



Hot stuff

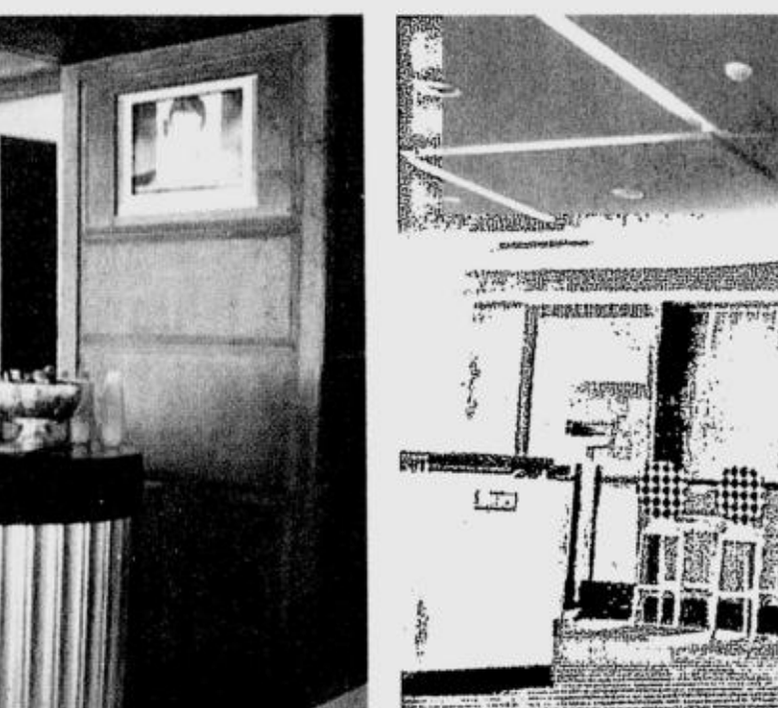
Photos by Chito Vecina
Visual concept by Albert Avellana

INDIAN cuisine is enjoying popularity for its piquant flavors and healthful preparations. Since there exists no written recipe in India, the individual is encouraged to orchestrate a dish by using fresh produce. The formidable task of a restaurant such as Raj is come up with consistent quality of its foods.

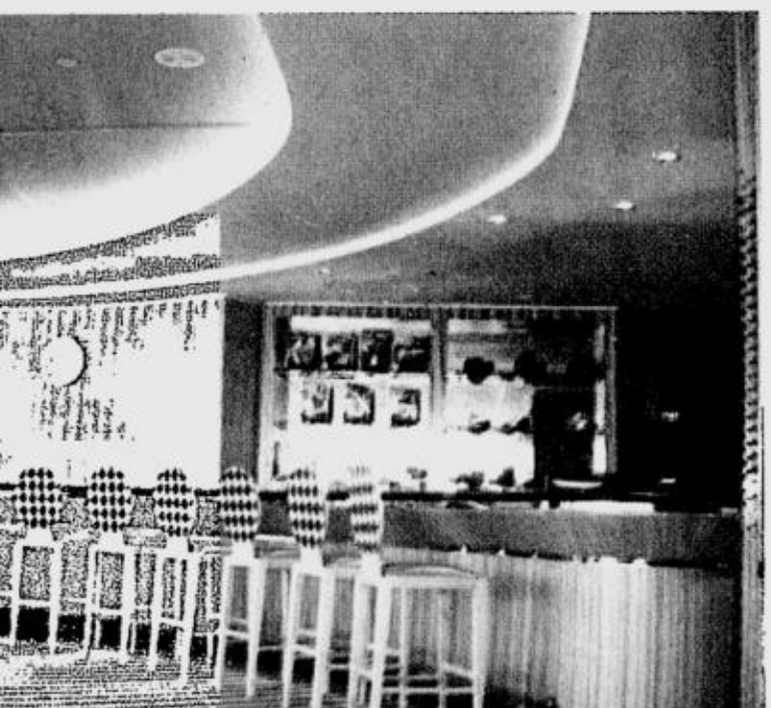
"Raj has just turned a year old last month and we have been challenged with the local market's growing sophistication for exotic cuisine. We are finding better ways of improving our cooking techniques and recipes, whilst preserving the delicate balance of fresh herbs and spices that make Raj's cuisine authentically Indian," says owner D.J. Montano.

The restaurant has included new items such as the chicken *samosa*, a traditional Indian pasty stuffed with minced chicken and spice; *murkha dhal*, a thick red-*dhal* dish made with coconut milk, spices and fresh vegetable broth that is served as a bread dip; lamb cutlets in spicy, tomato-based gravy mixture; fresh mussels simmered in coconut milk and white wine vinegar, and Tandoor-baked fluffy bread, generously filled with *paneer* and fresh herbs.

RAJ IS ON 1820 MA. OROSA STREET, MALATE / TEL. 525-4858



KEEP cool with *khulfi*, traditional Indian ice cream made with nuts and sweet spices.



INDIAN chicken liver *paté*, made from *masala paté* served with flatbread.

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Me and My (Long-gone) Dyslexia

Unicef's Outstanding Child Writer for 2001 speaks of bravery, strength and how she got by with a little help from her pen

By Zobel Certeza and Natasha Vizcarra

ON THE MORNING March 24 just last year, 12-year-old Macie Mendigo yawned and opened a copy of the Junior Inquirer. There, on Page 2, she saw the essay she sent published on the space for Journal Pages. "Me and My Dyslexia, by Macie Mendigo," it said. Macie gasped with delight. Her life would never be the same again.

In the span of a year, many good things happened to Macie because of her essay. Her piece was read during the graduation ceremonies at World Lab, her former school. Friends and family congratulated her for her bravery and courage to speak out. And on December, she got a call from the Unicef office in Manila, informing her that she had just been named the United Nation's Children's Fund's Outstanding Child Writer of the Year for her essay in JI.

"The call came out of the blue," she says. "I didn't know. I thought they were kidding but then when my mom told me about it, I was jumping!"

Me and My/p.5

A TERRIFIC KID.
For her courage to speak about her learning disability, Macie was commended by Unicef.

ROGER CARPIO

Victory for Harmonica

An essay by Anne Margaret C. Luna
Miriam College Grade School, Quezon City

I'M A GRADE 5 student from Miriam College Grade School. I belong to a section named Harmonica. Just last month, on Feb. 13, we held the most awaited sports activity: our "intrams" for this school year.

For Grade 5 students, the assigned sport was Tee Ball. For those who are not familiar with this sport, it's like playing softball. But it has slightly different rules. (See "What is Tee Ball?")

Our first opponent was section Kulintang. Fortunately, we won in our first game! Everybody cooperated, everyone gave their best, and everyone played their role.

By lunchtime, it was time to play the second game with section Kaleleng. Our fight was close. We had to break the tie by making another inning. So we made a big circle beside a football net, then we prayed hard, very hard.

Valentine's Day Jitters

One of my classmates asked God to give us a sign to tell us if we would win or not. I don't know if she saw a sign, but we did win although we did not expect it. We couldn't believe it!

Our final game was on Valentine's Day. That night, I sent 10 of my classmates a text message saying "Pls pray the whole rosary tonight."

We were to compete with section Marimba.

I could tell that they were good catchers. Our team captain, Andrea Austria, always had a chance to tag the batter. She was always beside the line where the batter ran. Our co-captain, Therese Ann Oleta, was also a good player like our captain. She's popular in class. Everyone likes her because she's responsible, obedient and friendly.

Anyway, our game with Marimba was very close. Unfortunately, we lost. Everyone was so disappointed. We don't know what went wrong. But all we knew that we gave our best, our very best.

Homeroom Blues

We all felt bad after the game. Almost all of us cried. We went back to our classroom to change back into our uniforms. Everyone was still crying, everyone was still disappointed. Then our homeroom teacher, Ms Almira Reymundo, made us feel a lot better when she said she very much appreciated the effort that we gave.

"It doesn't matter whether you win or not," she said. "What matters is that you gave your very best and you never cheated."

So whenever I remember what she said, I tell myself that winning is not only winning for someone, but winning according to the rules of the game. Winning is having confidence in yourself. Winning is enjoying what you can do and sharing your good intentions and talent with others.

What is Tee-Ball?

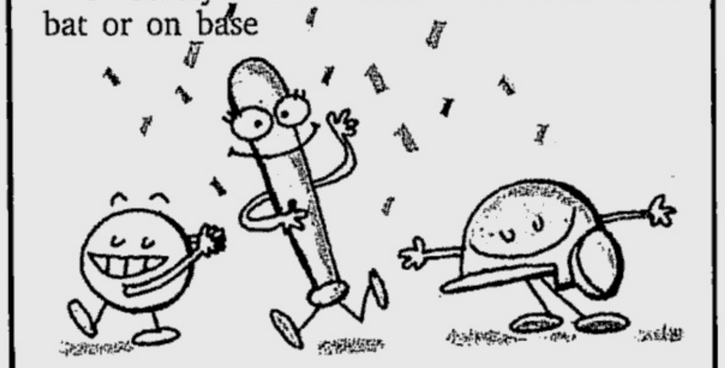
The game assigned to Grade 5 students of Miriam College for their intramurals is kind of like an intro sport to baseball and softball.

Members of two teams take turns hitting a ball off a batting tee set on home plate. Batters try to get on base and advance to home; fielders try to prevent that from happening. There is no pitcher.

Tee ball develops the basic baseball skills of hitting, running, fielding and throwing.

Tee Ball Rules:

- The ball is not pitched. It is hit off a batting tee.
- Every player bats and plays in the field.
- There are no strikeouts or walks (bases on balls)
- There is a real or pretend playing line between first base and third or curved 40 feet out from home plate.
- No fielder can cross the playing line until the ball is hit.
- The ball must be hit 10 feet or is a foul.
- When the ball is hit, don't throw the bat.
- Runners must stay on base until the ball is hit. There is no
- Stealing.
- The inning is over when all players have batted once.
- Safety helmets must be worn when at bat or on base



EDITOR'S NOTE

GRADE 5-Harmonica learned an age-old lesson on St. Valentine's Day. Winning indeed does not only mean getting the gold, silver or bronze medal. They discovered they worked well as a team; that they liked each other as team mates; and that the whole point of Intramurals Day is the experience, the exhiliration and the team spirit that sports fosters.

Do you have a good anecdote about your class or your school? Write an essay or a feature story and share it with our readers. Send by e-mail to ji@inquirer.com.ph or fax number 897-4793 or 94.

World Scope

Skin ID

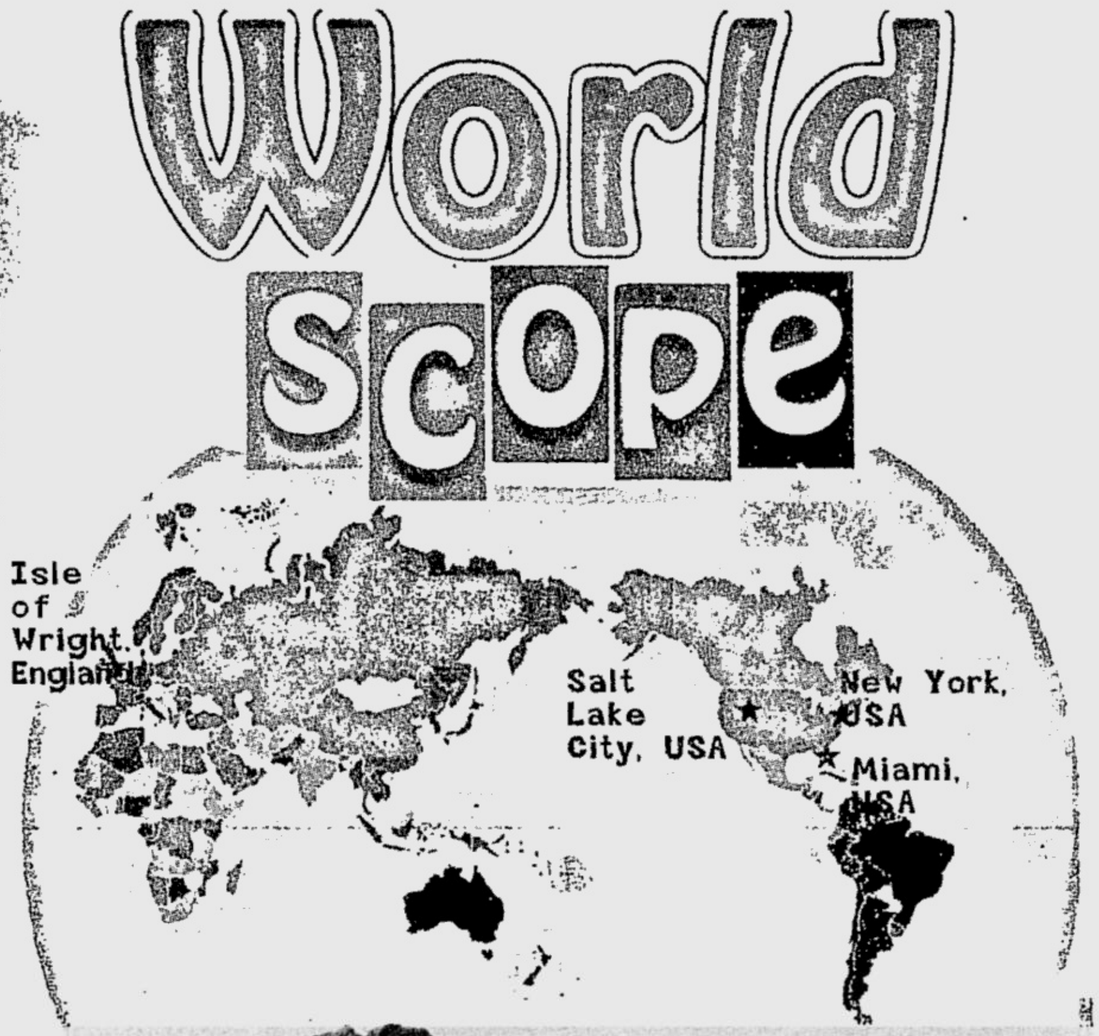
THE "VERICHIP" is the first ever-computer ID chip that could be embedded beneath a person's skin. It's the size of a grain of rice. The US-based company that sells it intends to limit marketing to companies that ensure its human use is voluntary. *AP*

Scaly Witness

IGWIG the Iguana arriving at Newport Magistrates Court on the Isle of Wight, southern England. Igwig made legal history two weeks ago when when he is called as a witness in the trial of Susan Wallace. The 47-year-old woman from Seaview, Isle of Wight, denied causing unnecessary suffering to the reptile by allegedly throwing it at a pub doorman. *AP*

Jurrasic Commentators

TWO giant dinosaurs skeletons rise above the Rice-Eccles Olympic Stadium commenting on the ongoing celebrations during the closing ceremony of the XIX Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah. The state of Utah is known as the "Valley of the Dinosaurs." *AP*



Backyard Find

BOB Moffett holds the thighbone of a Mastodon that was discovered on his property in North Java, New York. Twenty percent of the animal was recovered, notably an ivory tusk, a tooth, neck vertebrae, toe, ankle and wrist bones, skull fragments and the thighbone. *AP*

Contest

PAINTING CONTEST. Join the Likhang Sining on-the-spot painting contest on March 16 at the Ayala Museum Galleries. You must be a high school student and be sponsored by your school's Rotary Club or Interact Club. Get entry forms at the nearest Rotary office or at the Ayala Museum on the 3rd level of Glorietta 2 in Makati City. Need to beat the deadline? Fax your filled-up entry forms to 840-1588, 832-2778.

SNAIL MAIL TILT. Join the 2002 Universal Postal Union International Letter-Writing Competition for Young People. Students or non-students not more than 15 years old may submit their handwritten entries to Tirso N. Paglicawan Jr., Media and Public Affairs/ Editor in Chief, The Philpost Journal Care, Office of the Postmaster General, Philpost, 1000 Manila. Contest deadline is on March 27. Call up 527-0074 for more important details.

Got something for Out There? Send us the info two weeks in advance. Our fax numbers are 897-4793 up to 94. Don't forget to include your contact numbers and addresses.

Workshops

DECOUPAGE. Learn the art of decoupage on March 16 at the Earthlite, 4th floor COD Department Store Bldg., Cubao, Quezon City. For more info, call up 941-1136 or 417-1521.

BUSY SUMMER. Gear up for a busy summer at Sacred Heart School's Summer Enrichment Programs. Choose from the list of workshops they have prepared for you: Art workshop—5-15 years old; Taekwondo—5-15 years old; magic workshop—3-8 years old; creative writing—7-12 years old; ballet workshop—3-10 years old; arts, crafts and cooking—3-6 years old; reading and writing—3-7 years old; and tutorial classes for preschool and elementary. For information check out the nearest Sacred Heart School branch near you or call up 810-8506.

ARTS AND "KRAFT." Here are more classes in basic drawing, painting, sculpture and crafts for young artists ages 5-12. The 10th Kids at Art Summer Workshop is from April 1 to May 9. There will be 13 workshop venues in Metro Manila, Cebu and Davao. For inquiries and reservations please call 414-1954 or visit our website at www.kidsatart workshop.com

FREE LEARNING CAMP. Sacred Heart School Sun Valley offers a free Learning Camp today and on March 16. Visit them at 3690 Sun Valley Drive, Sun Valley Subdivision, Parañaque City or call 823-1348 or 776-0312 and look for Mary Rose.

PHOTOWORKSHOP. If you like taking pictures this workshop is for you. From April 6 to May 18, photographer Mandy Navasero will conduct a workshop on advance photography. Lectures and demo are scheduled every Saturday. Participants are required to use a 135mm or 120mm camera. For more details call up 522-1905, 522-5185 or 522-5189. You can also visit her studio at 1935 Dominga St., Pasay City.

SHUTTERBUG MOMENT. Join Mandy Navasero's photography workshop

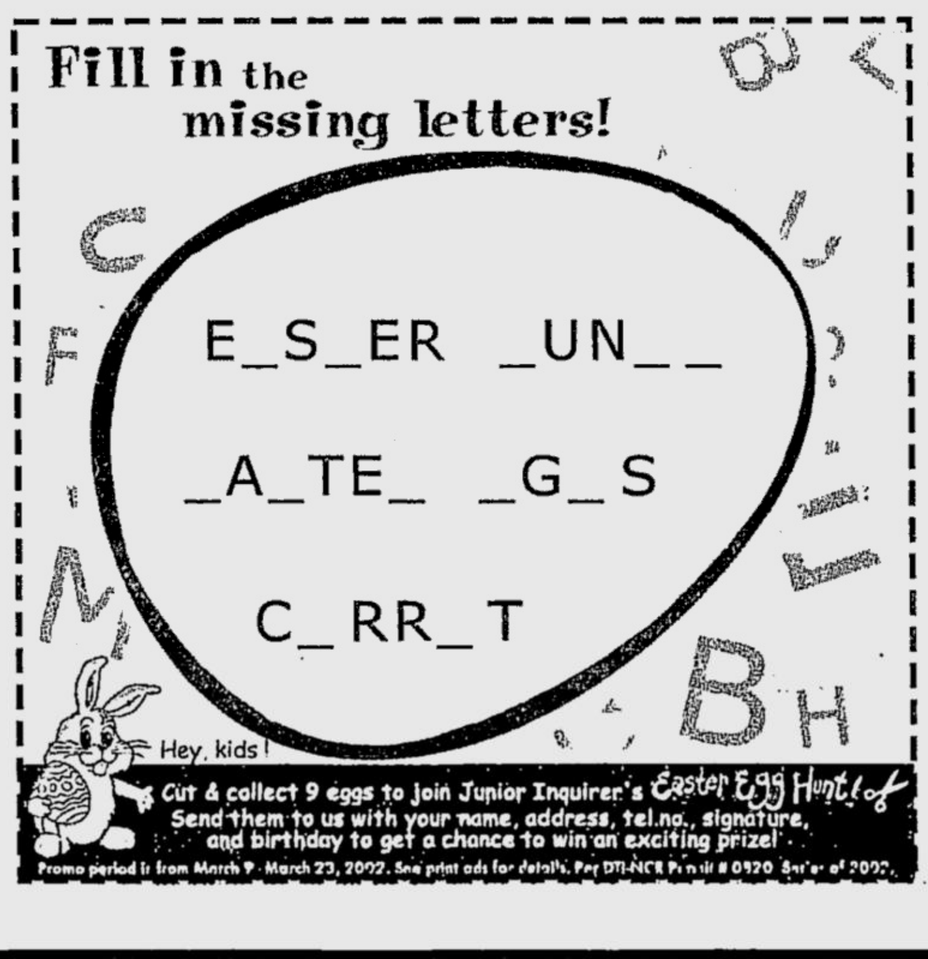
Activities

SEUSS GOES TO KINDER MINDS. Watch tots as young as 2 to 6 years old thrill and excite you with their song and dance numbers and move you to tears with their stories and friendship, love and hope in the play "Seuss Goes Places!" Playdate is on March 10 from 10 a.m. to 12 nn at the UP Abelardo Theater, Quezon City. For details call up 415-9333 and 413-6996.

Cable Picks

JOURNEY TO LIFE. Who are we? Where do we come from? National Geographic Channel features a documentary "Journey to Life." It traces humanity's history from amoebas to zebras. Premieres tomorrow at 9 p.m. and continues every Sunday of March.

FAT AND HAPPY. Catch National Geographic Channel's "Scientific American Frontiers" on March 11 at 11 p.m. Learn about America's latest epidemic—obesity. Did you know that 25 percent of American kids are obese? Here you'll see how well-meaning mothers teach their kids to overeat, the real relationships between activity and weight.



Me and My (Long-gone) Dyslexia

(from page1)

Dyslexic Days

Macie has come a long way from the days when she struggled with dyslexia, a learning ability. Dyslexic people have a hard time reading, spelling and writing. And young Macie couldn't understand why she was having trouble keeping up with the lessons in school. Her classmates teased her and her family was puzzled at her low grades.

"I felt like nobody cared about me," she said.

But Macie found out she was dyslexic when she turned 8. Her parents, who finally understood why she was having trouble with school work, transferred her to World Lab. World Lab is a school where children with learning disabilities are given special attention and specialized teaching.

"I loved it there! I met new friends who were dyslexic like me and the teachers were great because they were patient," she recalls.

Macie says her mom's support was very important in helping her overcome dyslexia.

"My mom gave me a card on my 12th birthday" she says. "It was a very emotional card... I cried while reading its message. She told me that I am important to her and that I am special."

"It helped me a lot knowing that even though nobody liked me that much, that even though I could't achieve anything, my mom is always there for me and believes in me!"

Soon enough, Macie was cured of her dyslexia. Now Macie goes to school in PAREF-Rosehill where she is a regular student just

Me and My /p.10

Poetry by Jose Miguel Tejido
Illustrations by Redge Abos

FOR or By KIDS

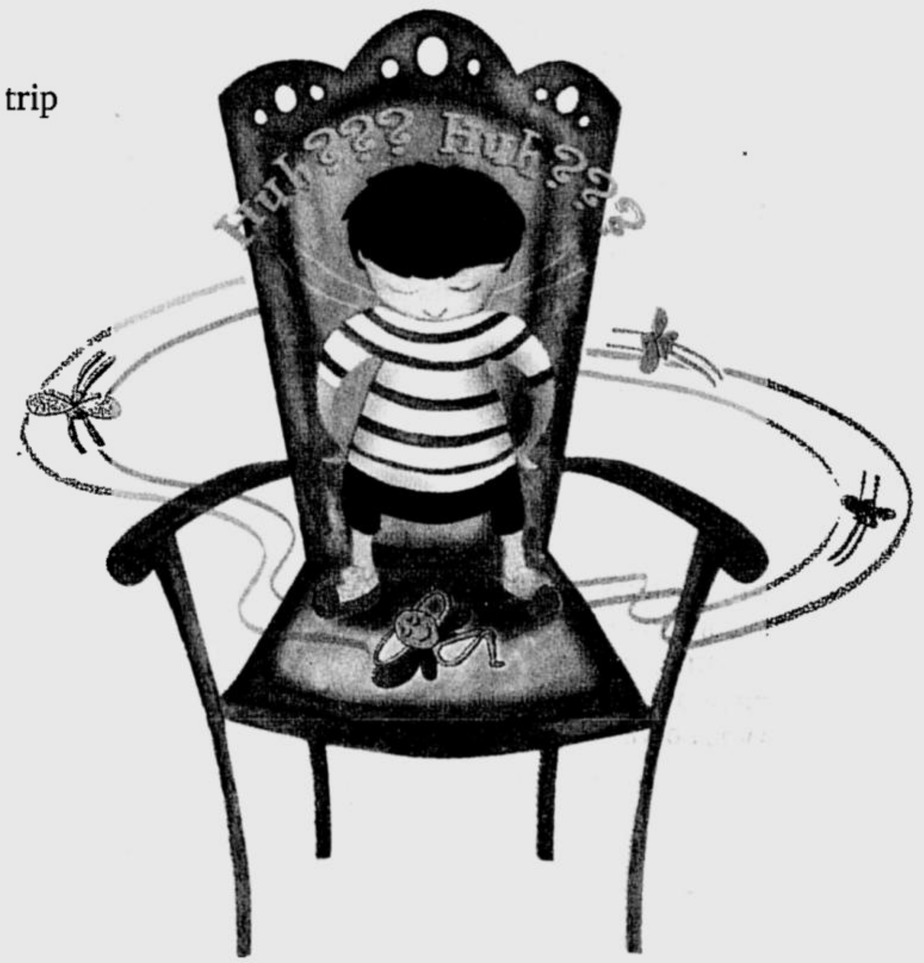
Little Dust Particle

O, Little dust particle
Sitting on my chair
You've come back from your trip
From Who-Knows-Where?

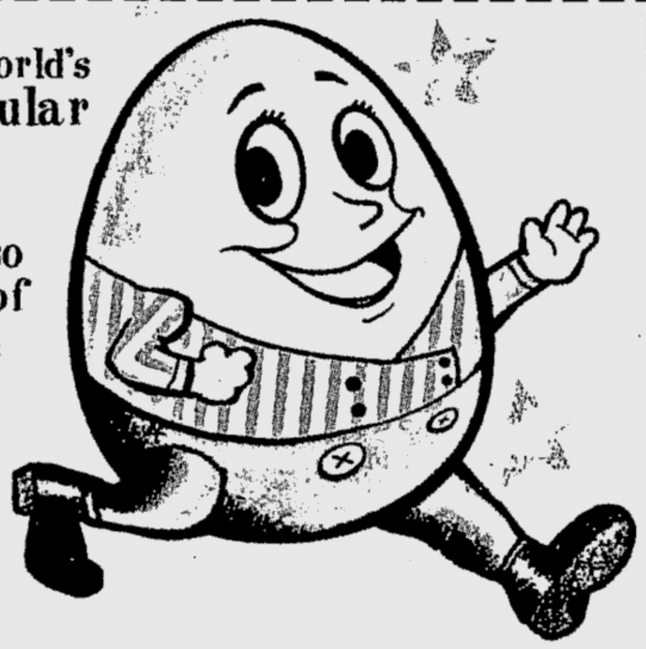
With my mighty damp rag
I thought I wiped you clean
Even had the gall to brag,
"He's never to be seen!"

I wonder where you go
After you've flown to the air
For in days you'd show
Sitting peacefully back there

I guess it's a mystery
For me to understand
O, little dust particle,
Where will you next land?



Name the world's most popular egg who's also the star of his own nursery rhyme.



Hey, kids!
Cut & collect 9 eggs to join Junior Inquirer's Easter Egg Hunt! Send them to us with your name, address, tel.no., signature, and birthday to get a chance to win an exciting prize!
Promo period is from March 9 - March 23, 2002 See print ads for details Per DTI NCR Permit # 0820 Series of 2002

***Jomike**, 19, likes writing about nature. He also illustrated the books "Abot Mo Ba ang Tainga Mo" and "Si Juanito sa Panahon ng Amerikano."*

***Redge** is a member of Ang Ilustrador ng Kabataan.*

Sweet Echoes

Telephone rings
And barking dogs
Honking horns and
Parents' calls

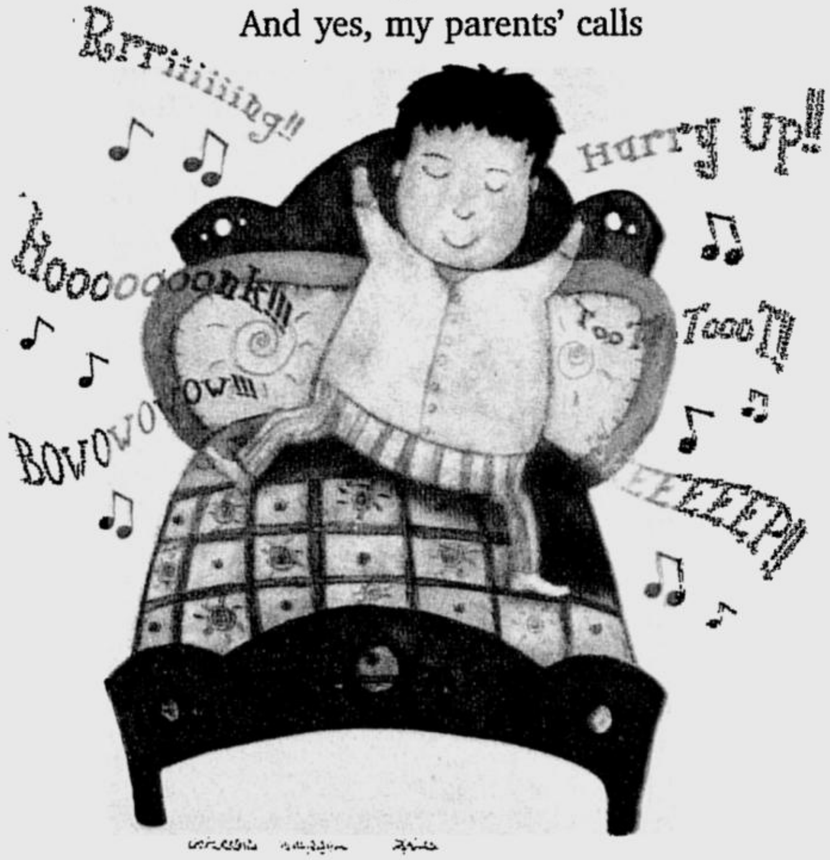
Are noises and voices
Which echo in my head
They come to me queer
In the silence of my sleep

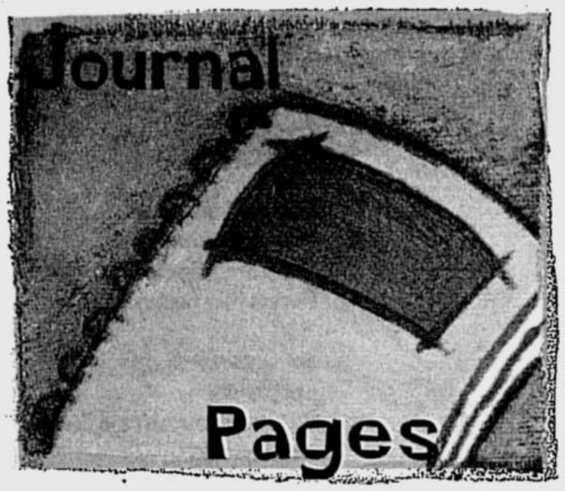
But once they're here
Adrenaline starts to brew
They're not quite what I hear
Like daily hullabaloo

Telephone sings
As dogs howl to the beat
Horns back the groove
Parents give the lead

And the singing goes on
As time flies away
And the shindig ends when
Alas, it's another day

Of telephone rings,
And barking dogs' brawls
Of honking horns
And yes, my parents' calls





MY FRIENDS always ask me if I have someone special in my life. But I always smile and shrug my shoulders as an answer. Because I already have someone special.

Someone Special

By Jules Edrich Sevilla Joaquin
Claret School, Quezon City

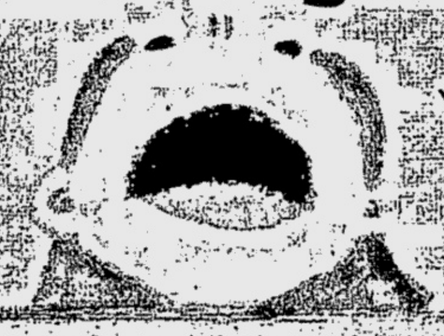
She is pretty as a rose. As sweet as my favorite chocolate. As loving as my mother (but sometimes much more).

I could not sleep at night without hearing her voice which is like music to my ears. She is my inspiration because I love her. And she loves me so much too.

She calls me different names like Jules, Jed, Love and Mahal. But. . . I simply call her Lola Fenny.

Sound Familiar ?
Write down your thoughts now and send them to JI. Who knows, you might just get published!

Straight from JI Readers



You can now reach us via e-mail! Our address is **ji@inquirer.com.ph** Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and your phone number. Hope to hear from you soon!

My One and Only Pet

I KNOW that it is very hard to do, this cloning thing. But I think it's wrong because it's like "playing God." I also know that if my pet dies, I will be very sad. But we have also to understand that we should accept what God gives us. But we should not ask for another. All things come to us on their own time.—**RENA CAMILLE P. VIRTUCIO**, 10, Maquiling School, Los Baños, Laguna

Of Dolphins and Theme Parks

RECENTLY, an article from the Philippine Animal Welfare Society was distributed in our class as reference of an extra project in Biology. It was about dolphins in captivity. While reading through it, I felt pangs of pity and guilt.

As we enjoy their playful tricks during the shows at marine parks, we are oblivious to the pain they are suffering. For every trick, a dead fish. In their natural habitat, they eat live ones. From the open, free, or wild life they used to lead, they are limited to a domesticated, controlled, or restricted life in captivity. From now on, I will turn deaf ears to whatever marketing ploy, or supposed educational benefit, marine theme parks blubber about. I would rather watch Discovery Channel or Animal Planet instead. They don't hurt animals and are more educational.— **JOYCE ANN. N. MAGLAQUE**, Miriam College High School, Quezon City

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Diving with a Mission

Ten-year-old Aeon Mapa cares about the sea

By Margaux Ortiz

EVER wondered how those colorful fishes in your aquarium would thrive in their natural habitat? Well, 12-year-old Rafael Domingo Mapa has actually seen that and more—he has swum with turtles, stingrays, dolphins and even a baby shark!

"I started snorkeling at the age of 6," says Aeon, a sixth-grader from Waldorf School. "But I soon got interested in diving when we went to Boracay once." He then took up a full course on diving and finished it on his 12th birthday.

How is snorkeling different from diving?

"In snorkeling, you stay on the surface," Aeon explains. "Although you could see the corals and the fish, the most you could do is go 10-20 feet down."

Diving, on the other hand, lets you see other species you wouldn't dream of seeing when you go snorkeling. "The fishes 90-100 feet down have more variety, they are more beautiful with brighter colors," shares Aeon. "And the more you go deeper, the more it gets darker. The colors of the corals and everything around fade and you have to bring a flashlight with you."

BETOY JOHNSON

ON DRY LAND. Aeon dons his scuba outfit for a JI shoot.

He says that his most memorable experience was when he encountered a big sea turtle or a *pawikan* in one of his dives. "Some divers haven't seen one even with their six years of diving," Aeon relates. "And I saw it on my third dive!"

Save the Ocean

But not everything he sees underwater is beautiful. "I sometimes see plastic bags among the corals when we go diving," says Aeon. "Even when snorkeling, I can see that some of the corals are black. It's now really easy to tell the difference between the live and the dead corals."

He adds that he has also experienced going to the beach and watching oil come out of the sand whenever he would stick something into the ground. "It's a shame how something so beautiful could be destroyed because of carelessness," laments Aeon.

The young diver has a suggestion to kids who are interested in diving. "It (diving) increases your awareness of what's really going on underwater—as beautiful as everything seems to look, there's a danger that it could all disappear," he shares. "If they are interested in saving the ocean, they should try diving."

R U 'RRIFIC!

'Rrific kids are smart
'Rrific kids are fun
Some aren't in the honors list
But get their homework done

Somehow the world's
a better place
I know this much is true
Hey 'Rrific kid!
We know you're there
We love you 'cause you're you!

If you think you're 'Rriffic' or know someone who is, fill out the nomination form below and send it to:

Junior Inquirer
'KIDS'R'RRIFIC' Page
Phil. Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces
cor. Yague & Mascardo Sts.
1231 Makati City

Chosen nominees will be featured on this page and will get a **free Junior Inquirer T-shirt!**

Kids'R'rrific nomination form

I nominate: _____

Age: _____

I think she's/he's 'Rrific because: (Here's a tip! Write a detailed description of a good deed, project or accomplishment by your nominee.)

She/he lives at _____

and studies at _____

Her/his contact number is: _____

Sender's Name: _____

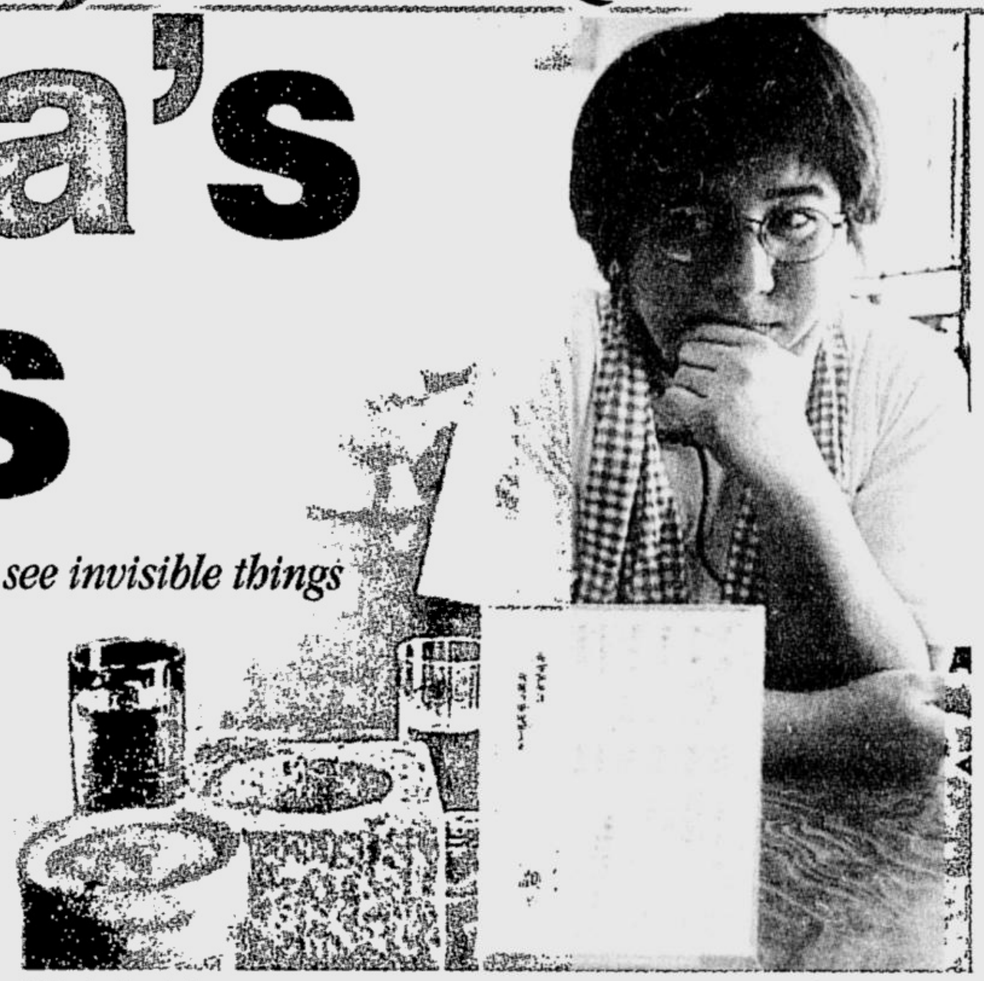
Sender's Age & School: _____

Sender's Address: _____

Sender's Contact No. _____

Nana's Eyes

She wants us to see invisible things



AT A CAFE. Nana is always looking for a good shot.

By Eline Santos

SIDHANA Buxani has very lovely eyes . . .but the real gift is not how they look. It's how she sees with them.

Armed with her trusty camera, Nana can see "invisible" things... and show them to others.

"When you pass by something everyday, you stop seeing it," she says. "Even if child labor is wrong, people stop seeing it as wrong because it is everywhere. People accept it," she explains.

A different kind of storyteller

Nana uses black and white images to tell the stories of ordinary persons.

One shows a boy sleeping among steel containers of fish at the Navotas fish port. He's tired from a hard day's work.

Another shot is of a child carrying a sack of garbage. He's been rummaging at the Payatas dumpsite.

Nana hopes that with the dramatic pictures, she is planting the seeds of change.

"You can't change the world overnight. You would just get frustrated. But I hope to help."

It is this hope that keeps her going.

"You never know, maybe a student who watched your film or saw your pictures will do something about the problem in the future," she says.

A planter, a painter and award-winning filmmaker

Nana not only plants seeds of change. Her green thumb is evident in the row of terrariums sitting prettily by the window.

Beside it is a bookshelf filled with her beloved photography books, while the walls are filled with her numerous paintings and prints.

One painting depicts three Aeta persons in a surreal landscape, which Nana says is a mix of her province, Mindanao, and Mt. Pinatubo.

"They're partly inspired by the places I have been to," she remarks.

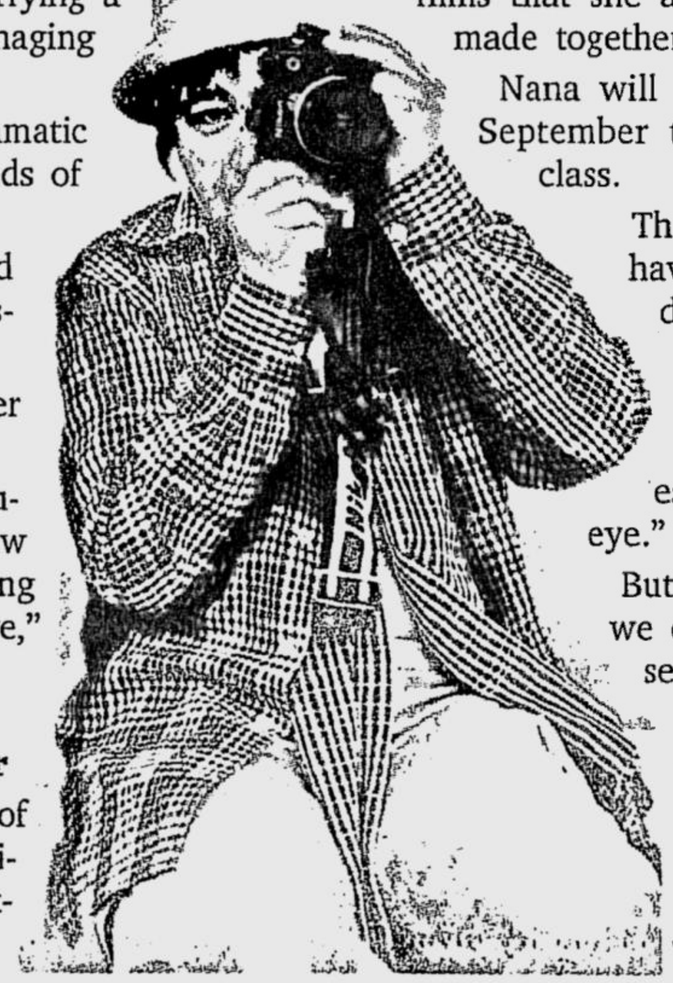
She's gone to Paris and Japan to attend film festivals and receive awards for documentary films that she and friend, Ditsi Carolino, made together.

Nana will also be in New York by September to attend a photography class.

The secret to success? "You have to believe in what you do," Nana advises.

A wise fox once said, "It is only with the heart that one can see rightly. What is essential is invisible to the eye."

But thanks to Nana's pictures, we can see some invisible essential with our own eyes. And just maybe, as Nana hopes, it will help change the world.



CHANGE. Nana hopes to let people see the world differently through her photographs.

Do you know a grown-up who

- is fun to be with
- has an exciting job
- keeps an amazing hobby
- is all of the above???

If you know a grown-up whom all kids will love, give him or her the stamp:

A.K.A. COOL

*Just fill out the nomination form below and tell us why your fave grown-up is the absolute coolest. If your nominee is chosen, **YOU'LL** get a free JI T-shirt! Now that's really cool.*

I nominate_____.
He/She is _____ years old and is my_____.
Here are five super solid reasons why I think you should write about him/her:
1)_____;
2)_____;
3)_____;
4)_____;
and
5)_____.

My nominee lives at_____
_____.
Give him/her a call at_____
or send him/her an e-mail at_____.
By the way, I'm_____
_____.
I'm _____ years old.
My address is_____
_____.
You may call me at_____.

Plural Forms-1

GOOD grammar requires a clear grasp of the correct plural forms of everyday nouns. Can you check out the right one (or ones) in each number?

1. mother-in-law
   - mothers-in-law
   - mother-in-laws
   - mothers-in-laws
2. goose
   - goose
   - gooses
   - geese
3. alumnus
   - alumnae
   - alumni
   - alumnuses
4. index
   - indexes
   - indexa
   - indices
5. hero
   - heros
   - heroes
   - heroses
6. deer
   - deer
   - deers
   - deeries
7. radius
   - radius
   - radii
   - radiuses
8. datum
   - data
   - datums
   - datas
9. analysis
   - analysis
   - analysises
   - analyses
10. volcano
    - volcanos
    - volcanoes
    - volcanoses
11. matrix
    - matrixes
    - matrices
    - matrixii
12. memorandum
    - memoranda
    - memorandums
    - memorandae

Answers :

12. memorandae
11. matrixes/matrices
10. volcanoes
9. analyses
8. data
7. radii
6. deer
5. heroes
4. indexes/indices
3. alumni
2. geese
1. mothers-in-law

Ratings :

11 - 12 8 - 10 5 - 9

ME & MY JI. A "Journal Pages" contribution went a long way for this young writer.

Me and My (Long-gone Dyslexia) (from page5)

like everyone else.

God's Reward

Well, maybe not so regular. Whether she liked it or not, Macie has become quite popular ever since receiving the award. More kids have asked for her advice on various things.

"My friends are still the same," she said. "Everyone's still the same, really. It's just that, they trust me more now than before."

The whole year has made her a stronger person. "I think that surviving dyslexia is one of God's ways of telling me that He doesn't give people problems that they can't handle," Macie says.

"I consider this recognition as a reward from God because I survived. It's like the game 'Survivor.' When you survive the challenge, you will get big rewards!" she adds.

People Should Know

What gave her the courage to tell the world about her experience? "We were supposed to write an article for the school paper," she says. "But my cousin suggested that I send it to JI. I never expected it to be published," she giggles.

"But, first of all, I want to share to people how I felt about being dyslexic. I knew many of my emotions were so private. But then I wrote it because I wanted to help other kids learn about dyslexia."

Macie says it's very possible that there are dyslexic kids out there who aren't doing well in school. Their parents might not know. Their teachers might not know.

"I want to say that dyslexia is not an abnormality," she stresses. "They can do something about it and there are special schools that they can go to for help like my previous school."

Finally, Macie says she wanted to be known as a person who has survived dyslexia, just like the famous physicist Albert Einstein.

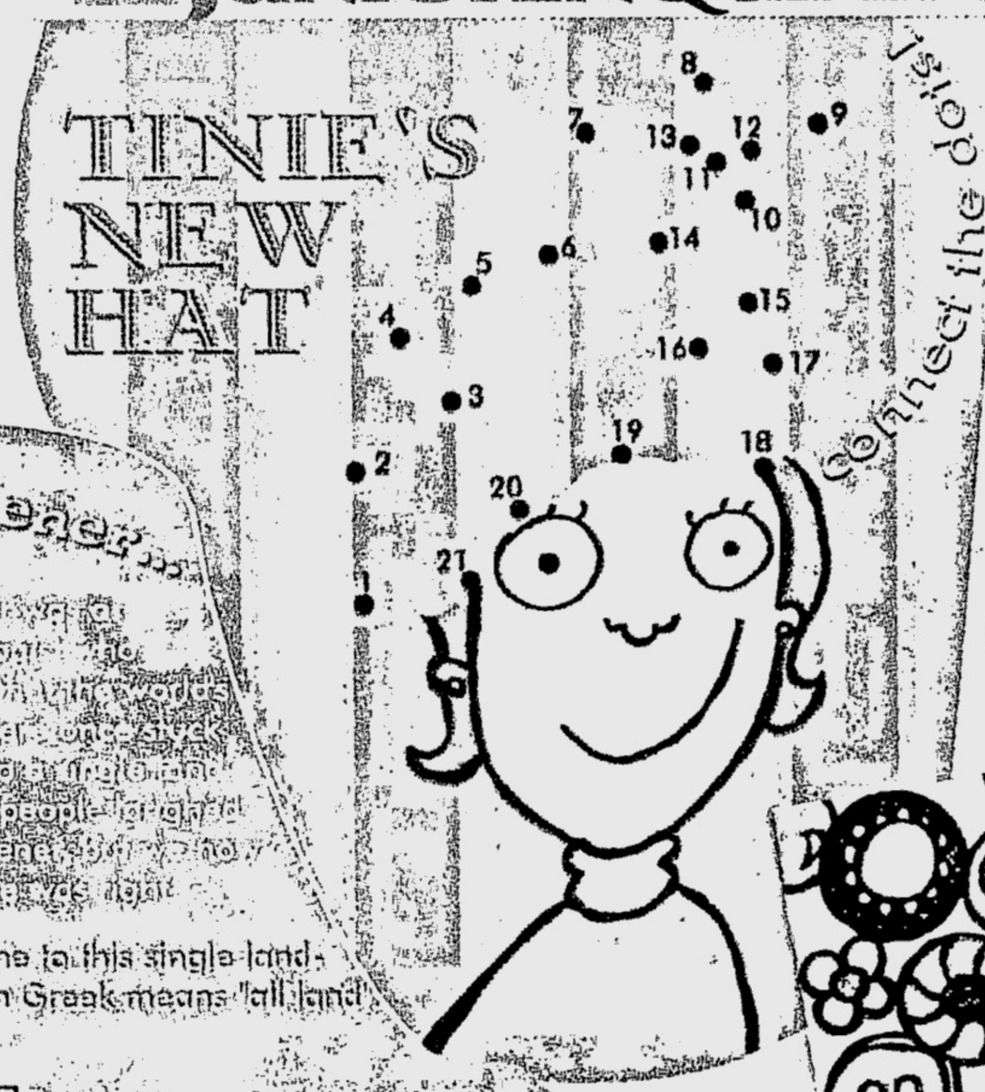
"Like Einstein and other famous dyslexics, I can do great things too."

And she certainly did.

THE LUNCH BOX

by Katrina B. Villa

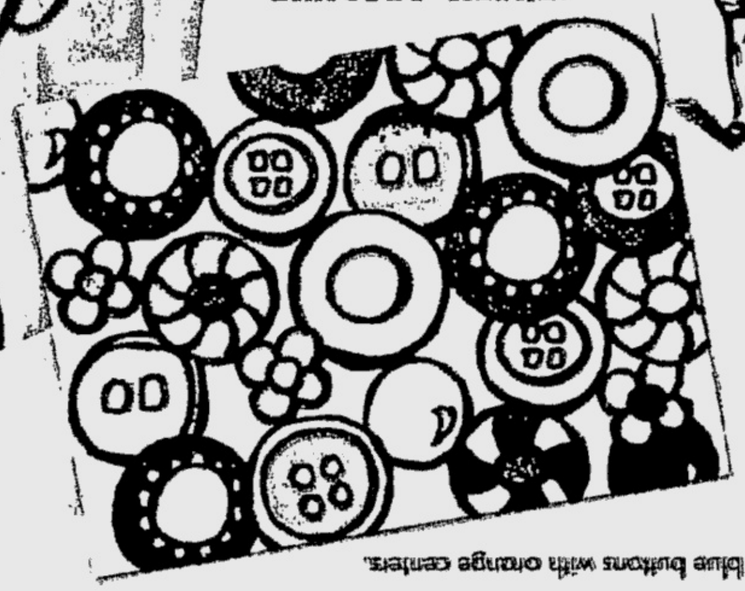
TINIE'S NEW HAT



BUTTON UP!

Why do men's shirts button left side over right? There are many possible reasons. One is that it was easier for men to button up their clothes with their left hand while still holding onto a weapon with their right.

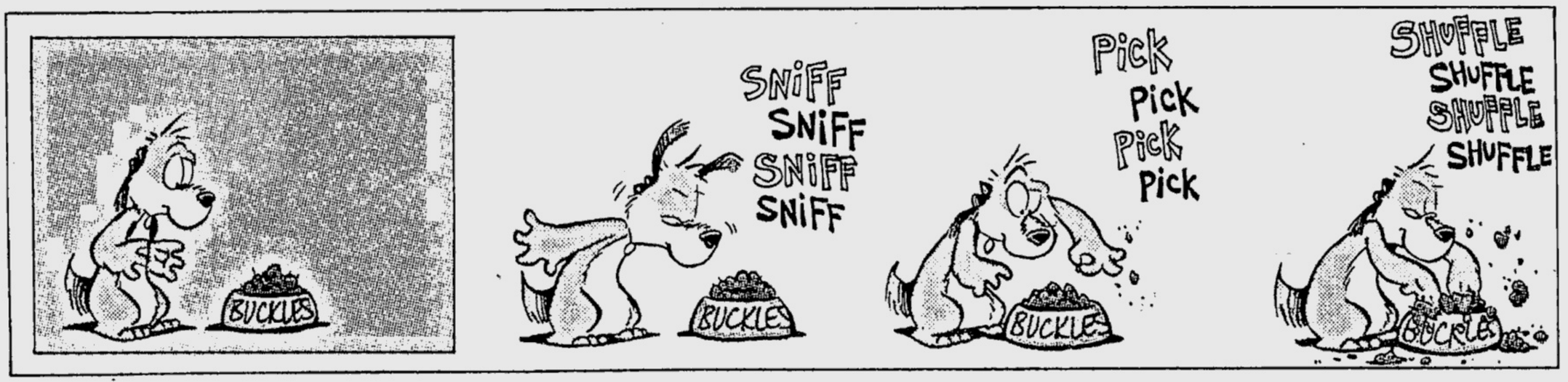
FIND THE TWO BUTTONS THAT ARE EXACTLY ALIKE!



Answer: The blue buttons with orange centers.

BUCKLES

BY DAVID GILBERT



Hey kids!

Join Junior Inquirer Easter Egg Hunt!

And get a chance to win a cool prize!

Calling all kids aged 5-12!

For the month of March, your mission is to find all the Easter eggs hidden in the pages of the Junior Inquirer issues on March 9, 16 and 23. Once you've collected 9 of the 12 eggs, answer them completely and correctly and put in an envelope with a piece of paper with your name, address, tel. no., signature and date of birth and mail them to us for a chance to win in our grand Easter raffle.

PROMO MECHANICS: EASTER EGG HUNT

1. The promotion is open to children 5 to 12 years old. For three (3) consecutive issues, March 9, 16 & 23, 2002, four (4) Easter eggs will be hidden in the pages of the Junior Inquirer.
2. Look for the eggs and accomplish the activity asked for in each egg and cut out.
3. Collect at least nine of the twelve eggs that will come out in the three (3) issues published within the promo duration (March 9, 16, 23) and with a piece of paper write your name, address, tel. no., affix your signature & date of birth, put these inside a white legal size envelope and mail to Easter Egg Hunt c/o Junior Inquirer, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces cor. Yague & Mascardo Sts.,1231 Makati City.
4. This serves as a single official entry to the raffle draw during which the following prizes shall be given away. Thirty five (35) winners will be drawn.

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Minor prizes:
Ten (10) Burger King Kids Club Toy Sets

Only entries with the minimum number of nine eggs and with complete correct answers are considered valid.

5. Entries must be received by 5:00pm of April 1, 2002 to qualify for the raffle draw.
6. An individual may send more than one entry but can only win once in the raffle draw. However, if a name is drawn more than once, the winner gets the prize with the higher value.
7. The raffle draw will be held on April 6, 2002 at 3:00pm and will be held at the Philippine Daily Inquirer office at Chino Roces Ave. corner Yague & Mascardo Sts., Makati City in the presence of an official DTI representative.
8. Raffle prizes are not convertible to cash.
9. Raffle draw winners will be notified by phone and registered mail and their names will be announced via print ads.
10. Winners can claim their prizes at the PDI office upon presentation of the notification letter and a valid ID. (school ID or passport)
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No ransom deal, US gov't tells Abu Sayyaf bandits

STORY ON PAGE A2

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March 10, 2002 ★★ 64 pages / 5 sections / vol.17 / no. 92 P15

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PRESIDENT Macapagal: She just used the helipad at the VMMC, according to Tiglao.

EDWIN BACASMAS

TODAY IN THE INQUIRER

- Lynn Sherman on her own
- Sarah Balabagan moves on

Erap 'snubs' Gloria

But Tiglao denies President made surprise visit at hospital

By Juliet L. Javellana, Volt Contreras and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo, with Justice Secretary Hernando Perez in tow, reportedly paid a "surprise" visit yesterday morning to Joseph Estrada but the VIP detainee refused to receive his VIP guest.

Estrada told the INQUIRER in a phone interview yesterday afternoon that he and his successor had "nothing to talk about." And besides, "she came without any *abiso* (notice)," he said. "I was still in pajamas and my knees were hurting."

A congressman, who asked not to be named, told the INQUIRER that the President and Perez arrived at 8 a.m. at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City, where Estrada is detained, and waited for an hour outside the tightly guarded hospital annex.

The congressman said he was not present at the time of the supposed visit but that he phoned Estrada, who confirmed the President's arrival.

"*Ano pa daw ang pag-uusapan nila* (What else is there for them to talk about)?" the source said, quoting Estrada.

But Rigoberto Tiglao, spokesperson for the President, said there was no such visit.

"I heard the rumors. She did not visit Erap. She just used the helipad (of the VMMC to fly to Tanauan, Batangas)," he said when he was finally reached by phone late yesterday afternoon. Past presidents have used that helipad because the VMMC is a secure military hospital.

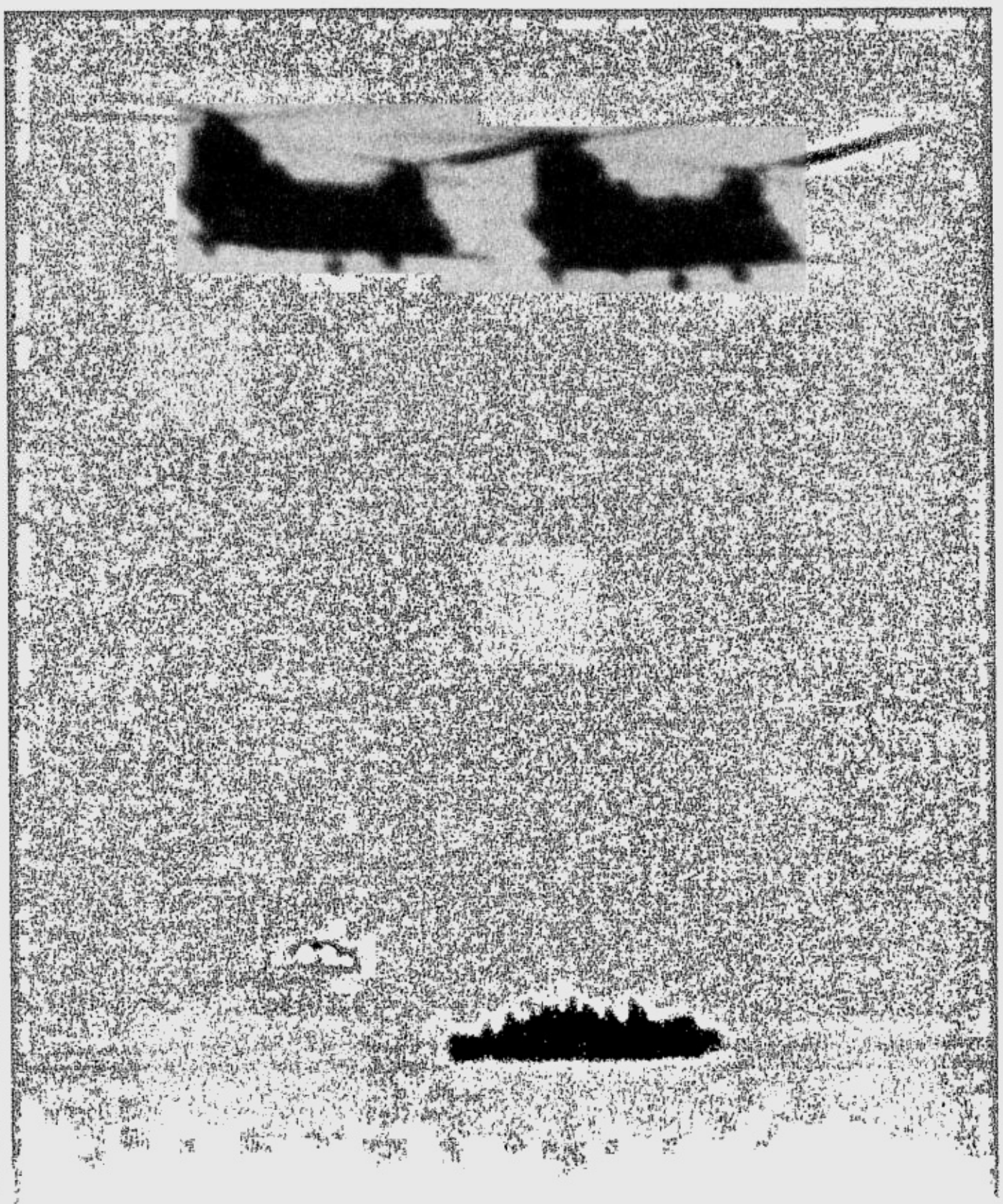
Tiglao insisted that the President "did not enter any building" of the hospital.

"She went straight from her car to the helicopter," he said, adding that the VMMC helipad was the nearest to the National Broadcasting Network (Channel 4) building on Visayas Avenue, where she had taped a message.

Ms Macapagal visited Tanauan to commemorate the 111th birth anniversary of the late President Jose P. Laurel. Perez, a native of Batangas, flew with the President in the chopper.

"For the President, it's still business

ERAP/A20



TWO US Chinook helicopters hover above a fishing boat off the Basilan coast after dropping Navy frogmen during a night naval exercise.

GMA caught in prongs of dilemma, says official

By Juliet L. Javellana

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is in a "hell of a dilemma" over what to do with her ousted predecessor, according to a ranking administration official close to her.

The official, who requested anonymity, said that at "various stages," the President had favored or backtracked on the proposed exile for Joseph Estrada, who is facing plunder charges at the Sandiganbayan.

"She would agree to exile but civil society would pounce on her," the official told the INQUIRER Wednesday night. "But the Erap forces are mobilizing in the urban slum areas. It's a hell of a dilemma for her."

The official said that before the failed Senate impeachment trial and immediately after she was sworn in as President, Ms Macapagal was "in favor" of exile for Estrada, but that she "back-pedalled" when civil society raised a ruckus shortly before he was arrested.

In June, July and August, the official said, Ms Macapagal adopted the policy of "leave it to the Sandiganbayan."

"That was her position until a few weeks ago," the official said. However, with Estrada having declared loss of faith in the judicial system, "she's really concerned."

But Estrada yesterday continued to draw brickbats from various sectors.

Three influential law organizations—the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), Philippine Bar Association (PBA) and Philippine Judges' Association (PJA)—issued separate statements defending the judicial system that Estrada has attacked.

Former President Fidel Ramos ad-

GMA/A20

US doctor treats 2 Abu victims

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Even while US forces are taking part in a controversial joint military training exercise aimed at crushing the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan, they are not wasting any opportunity in winning the hearts and minds of the civilian populace.

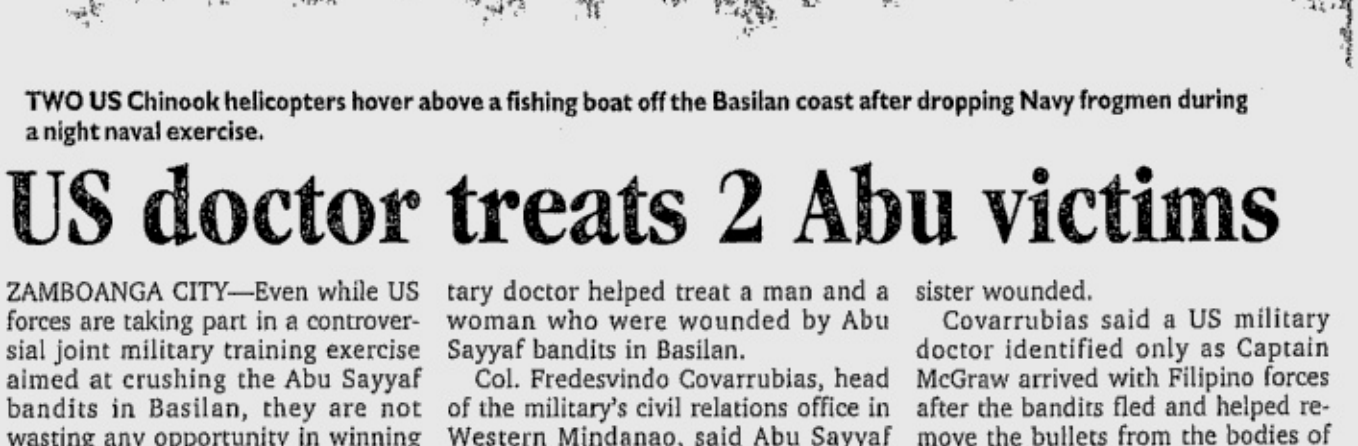
Last week, for instance, a US military doctor helped treat a man and a woman who were wounded by Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan.

Col. Fredesvindo Covarrubias, head of the military's civil relations office in Western Mindanao, said Abu Sayyaf bandits sprayed a house with gunfire in Tipo-tipo town late Thursday, leaving a 27-year-old man and his 18-year-old sister wounded.

Covarrubias said a US military doctor identified only as Captain McGraw arrived with Filipino forces after the bandits fled and helped remove the bullets from the bodies of the two victims.

"They're all fine," Covarrubias

US/A20



TWO American soldiers reinforce the perimeter defense at the Philippine Marine command post in Maluso, Basilan. AP

Woman is new chair of demutualized stock exchange

By Doris C. Dumlao

"WE'RE no longer an old-boy club."

With these words, Vivian Yuchengco yesterday assumed the chairmanship of the Philippine Stock Exchange board of governors, promising to build up the local bourse under a demutualized setup.

Her election, however, is being challenged by a big number of brokers.

Yuchengco, president of The First Management Resources, won the support of eight of the 15 PSE governors, most of whom are non-brokers.

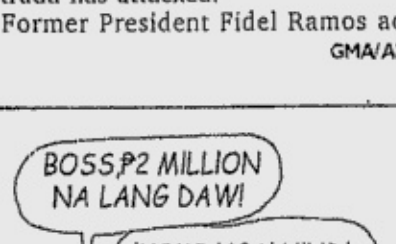
But her rival for the top post, Robert Coyiuto, threatened to question her election in court.

Coyiuto managed to get only seven votes during the board's secret balloting even though his group won five of the seven board seats allotted to brokers.

The Securities Regulation Code mandates that eight members of the PSE board must be non-brokers.

Cesar Cruz, legal counsel of Coyiuto's group, said the non-broker directors should have abstained from

WOMAN/A19



Who'll get TV rights to RP wedding of year?

By Leah Salterio

IF IRENE Marcos-Araneta and Jackie Ejercito-Lopez, and even Richard and Lucy, and Aga and Charlene, could do it, why can't Mikey Arroyo?

An insider of a giant television network told the INQUIRER that the exclusive TV airing of the wedding of Juan Miguel Macapagal-Arroyo to his second cousin Angela Montenegro was offered to the network for P5 million.

When the network did not bite, the asking price was lowered to P2 million, said the insider.

WHO'LL/A20

Second FRONT PAGE

No ransom deal, US tells Abus

WASHINGTON—The United States condemned the Abu Sayyaf who produced another videotape of a US missionary couple that they seized 10 months ago from a Palawan resort, saying it did not make concessions to "terrorists."

A day after Philippine television stations aired the footage of Martin and Gracia Burnham, the US State Department said it was "deeply concerned" about the couple, but denied that US troops advising Philippine forces had been deployed to rescue them.

"The United States strongly condemns the continued captivity of these innocent people," said Lynn Cassel, a State Department spokesperson.

"The Burnhams should be released immediately, safely and unconditionally," she said.

In the tape, Martin Burnham said he and his wife were being held by Abu Sayyaf guerrillas because of alleged Western indifference to persecuted Muslims and US "support" for Manila's alleged illegal occupation of Muslim land.

Under duress

But Cassel said the US government considered that the tape had been made under duress, and backed up queries by Philippine officials over when the tape was made.

"The United States does not make concessions to terrorists," Cassel said.

"We cannot verify when this videotape was made. However, the United States remains deeply concerned about the well-being of the Burnhams," he said.

Cassel said that the rescue of US hostages was not the mission of the US troops currently deployed in Basilan and Zamboanga to train Filipino soldiers pursuing the Abu Sayyaf.

In the footage shown by local television stations, Burnham's wife, Gracia, sat impassively beside him while three hooded men brandishing assault rifles stood behind the couple, surrounded by indistinct vegetation.

In earlier footage released in November, the couple looked more haggard with their hands shaking, their voices cracking and their eyes going in and out of focus.

Old footage

Philippine officials earlier said that the footage shown on Thursday must have been shot one or two months after the couple's abduction in May last year.

In Basilan, a brother of an Abu Sayyaf leader said the Burnham video had been taken by journalist Arlyn dela Cruz, who has been reported missing since January.

Sahinon Hapilon, the younger brother of Abu Sayyaf leader Isnilon, said Dela Cruz, a reporter of the Net 25 television station, shot the video on Nov. 25 and later sold it to Reuters.

The information was relayed to the INQUIRER through a health worker with access to the Abu Sayyaf.

It was not clear whether the bandit group had issued an embargo on the video for release at a later date.

Sahinon said the video was the last footage taken of Martin and Gracia Burnham because his brother and Hamsiraji Sali had stopped granting media interviews.

Can't be Arlyn

The Burnhams were originally being held by Abu Sabaya and Khadaffy Janjalani. The two turned over the hostages to Sali and Hapilon after they fled Basilan.

Dela Cruz is believed to have access to Sabaya and Janjalani but not to other Abu Sayyaf leaders.

Sahinon said his brother and Sali would "only entertain negotiators."

National security adviser Roilo Golez said, however, he did not believe that Dela Cruz had shot the video.

"It cannot be an Arlyn dela Cruz video because it looks very different," he said.

But Golez said the video was "obviously taped many months ago, perhaps even a month or two after the Burnhams were abducted in May 27 last year." ***AFP and Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

We had nothing to do with ransom–military

By TJ Burgonio

MILITARY officials yesterday denied they had anything to do with the alleged payment of ransom for the release of Abu Sayyaf hostages in Lamitan, Basilan, last June.

But if the hostages managed to pay ransom to the bandits, "that's beyond us," said Brig. Gen. Emmanuel Teodosio, the Armed Forces' deputy chief of staff for education.

"I don't think the military is behind the payment of ransom. The AFP has always followed the no-ransom policy of the government," Teodosio said in a phone interview.

Teodosio was reacting to the Senate testimony of 8-year-old RJ Recio on Friday, in which the boy said that the bandits had led him and two other hostages, businessman Reghis Romero and his girlfriend Rissa Santos, out of a hospital in Lamitan on June 2.

'Paid for'

Recio, who was abducted with his parents and several others from the Dos Palmas resort in Palawan and brought to Basilan last May, also testified that he heard one of the bandits say that "they were already paid for."

The boy's testimony, senators observed, contradicted an earlier claim of the military that Recio, Romero and Santos had been rescued.

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III earlier charged that the government had made a P17 million ransom payment for the release of the Abu Sayyaf hostages.

Teodosio also said he doubted that a recently shown videotape of the American missionary couple Martin and Gracia Burnham, still being held by the Abu Sayyaf, would earn the bandit group any sympathy from international terrorist groups.

Bandits unmasked

"The group has been unmasked as bandits, terrorists and extortionists with no political agenda. I don't think they would gain support from international terrorist groups," he said.

Defense officials said the Abu Sayyaf had intended the tape for an international audience "to show that they are still strong and should be given support."

In the tape, Martin Burnham said that their captors were "targeting US, European and other Western nations" because of Western indifference to persecuted Muslims, and US support for the Philippines' alleged illegal occupation of Muslim land.

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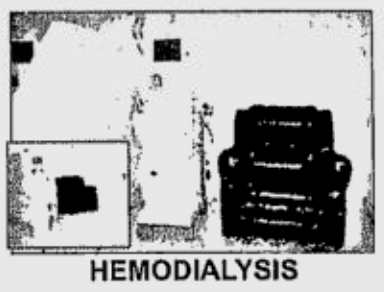
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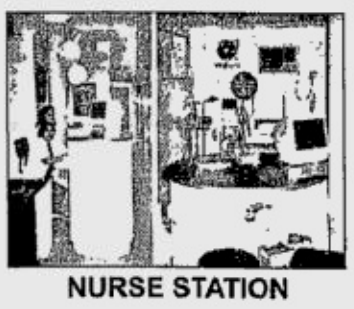
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Synchronized polls to cut costs by half

By C. Balana

HOLDING simultaneous barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections on July 15 will cut the government expenses for the twin polls by half.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said this yesterday as he called for the synchronization of the two elections instead of holding them on separate dates.

Pimentel said that the Commission on Elections will be spending only P1.1 billion for the synchronized elections instead of the usual P2.2 billion for conducting separate elections.

The decision to hold the two elections on July 15 was made by the bicameral conference committee during a marathon meeting Friday. The final date was a compromise between the Senate and House versions of the bill.

Funding problem

The Senate version provides that the barangay election be held on May 13 and the SK election in November this year. The House version calls for simultaneous election of barangay and SK officials on the first Monday of November.

Pimentel said that the synchronization scheme has effectively solved the funding problem for the SK election.

A total of P1.1 billion was already earmarked for the barangay election under the 2002 national budget but there was still no corresponding funding for the SK election.

The senator said that the Comelec had assured Congress that if the two elections were held on the same date, expenses would be reduced by half.

According to Pimentel, the resetting of the two elections will prevent the disenfranchisement of an estimated 3 to 5 million first-time youth voters who failed to register during the Dec. 10 to 26, 2001 registration conducted by the Comelec.

He said it will also give the Comelec ample time to prepare for the elections, and to live up to the expectations for holding clean, orderly and credible political exercises.

The Senate and House panels reconciling the two bills agreed that youth voters in the 15-17 age bracket should vote only for SK officials while those who are 18 and above should vote only for barangay officials.

"This will avoid a confusing situation where the youth voters who are 18 and above will have to vote twice—first for SK officials and then for barangay officials," Pimentel said.

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Gov't driver for his wife? So what? says Roco

By Donna S. Cueto

YES, his wife uses a Department of Education driver assigned to him. And yes, he used a private helicopter to visit schoolbuilding constructions once last year.

But these are not significant issues according to Education Secretary Raul Roco.

Speaking for the first time since DepEd employees started protest rallies against him, Roco said there was nothing wrong at all with his wife's use of his driver, or of his use of private helicopters rented for around P200,000 in two days to visit school building constructions.

"That's my driver I just assigned him to my wife. Right now, among all the Cabinet members, I'm the only one who does not have a backup and bodyguard. I'm entitled to that," Roco explained.

"So I use two drivers," he said.

DepEd employees rallying against Roco protested his allowing the use of a salaried DepEd employee, Pablito Aquino, with the position of Chauffeur I, to be the personal driver of his wife. They claimed that under government rules, this was not allowed—that a DepEd employee be used by someone not connected with the department.

'So petty, so mean'

"I think it is so petty and so mean, *di ba*? Because I am entitled to two cars and a whole set of backup," Roco said.

"I don't use him, so why shouldn't my wife use him? I don't even use a backup," Roco said.

Asked about the DepEd employees' position that a salaried DepEd driver should not be used for a function not connected to the DepEd office, Roco replied, "But I'm entitled to it anyway, because I could even have one backup."

"I cannot have two drivers *naman* in my car, so I let my wife use the other driver. Is that wrong? Will they therefore feel that if I terminate him, that I have done a great service to the Republic?" Roco said.

The education chief said that he really did not want to have a running debate of such "insignificant issues."

He felt that his political detractors were behind it.

DepEd employees started rallies against him on Feb. 14, marking the year of his appointment. On women's day, March 8, DepEd women employees staged a "women's people power" against him.

The DepEd union claimed that these were valid

ROCO

issues that they were raising against Roco.

The employees, who started calling for Roco's resignation, said that they were not politically motivated at all.

Unaffected

Roco claimed he was not affected by the rallies and noise barrages against him by his employees.

The once most popular senator is facing criticism inside his department where he was allegedly becoming increasingly unpopular.

Roco said that he would not mind the protest rallies, and would not even ban them.

"This government was brought in by demonstrations so I'm not going to complain," he said.

On his use of private helicopters on Oct. 10 and 11, Roco said that he did that because he wanted to monitor the schoolbuilding projects of the World Bank-funded Third Elementary Education Project in the Cordilleras.

He said that because of his close monitoring, the DepEd under his administration was able to build 854 schoolbuildings, compared to the 300 schoolbuildings done by the past administration in two and a half years. He said that in one year, the department had also rehabilitated more than 1,500 schoolbuildings compared to just around 500 in the past administration.

Roco claimed that DepEd aimed to build 2,702 schoolbuildings this year, and rehabilitate 5,698 more. All of these are under the TEEP projects funded by World Bank.

Steady power for Boracay

BORACAY, the country's premier tourist destination, will have a reliable and steady supply of power if the National Power Corp. approves a proposal by the local electric cooperative to construct the 69-kilovolt transmission line from Nabas to Caticlan in Aklan.

Luovigildo Mationg, general manager of the Aklan Electric Cooperative, told the Napocor that the upgrading of the transmission line from 13.8 to 69 KV was the key to solving the power shortage and erratic voltage on the world-famous resort island.

The proposal was contained in a letter to Napocor officer-in-charge Roland Quilala, according to a press statement from Akelco.

Resort owners and tourist establishments on the island have been complaining about frequent power interruptions all day and low voltage during its peak hours of 5 to 12 p.m.

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Ople defends Taiwan jet deal

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE PHILIPPINES has the right to buy military jets from whom it wants without being criticized for it.

Sen. Blas Ople, chair of the Senate committee on foreign relations, thus expressed yesterday displeasure at China's protest over the Philippines' planned purchase of 24 F5-E fighter jets from Taiwan.

"The Philippines as a sovereign nation has the option to refurbish its arsenal as the pressures of security require," Ople said in reaction to a statement from the Chinese Embassy in Manila that expressed Beijing's sentiments against the purchase.

Tong Ziaoling, Chinese deputy chief of mission, called Wednesday on acting Foreign Secretary for Asia-Pacific Antonio Rodriguez to relay China's apprehension over the sale, as well as a supposed plan to let Taiwan use Philippine airspace to train in.

Quoting a top DFA official, Ople said what has Beijing worried are the terms set by Taipei for the sale of the jets at low rates, one of them it to allow Taiwanese fighter pilots to train in Philippine airspace.

Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona denied this, however, saying Taiwanese pilots will only be allowed to fly here while training Philippine pilots.

Taiwan, a tiny island off the coast off gigantic China, lacks the airspace to properly train its pilots who fly state-of-the-art fighter jets, like the American F16 Fighting Falcon and the French Mirage 2000-5.

Tong reportedly told Rodriguez that if the Philippines approves the deal with Taiwan and war broke out in the Taiwan Straits, Taiwan could use the Philippines as a base to launch its fighter jets.

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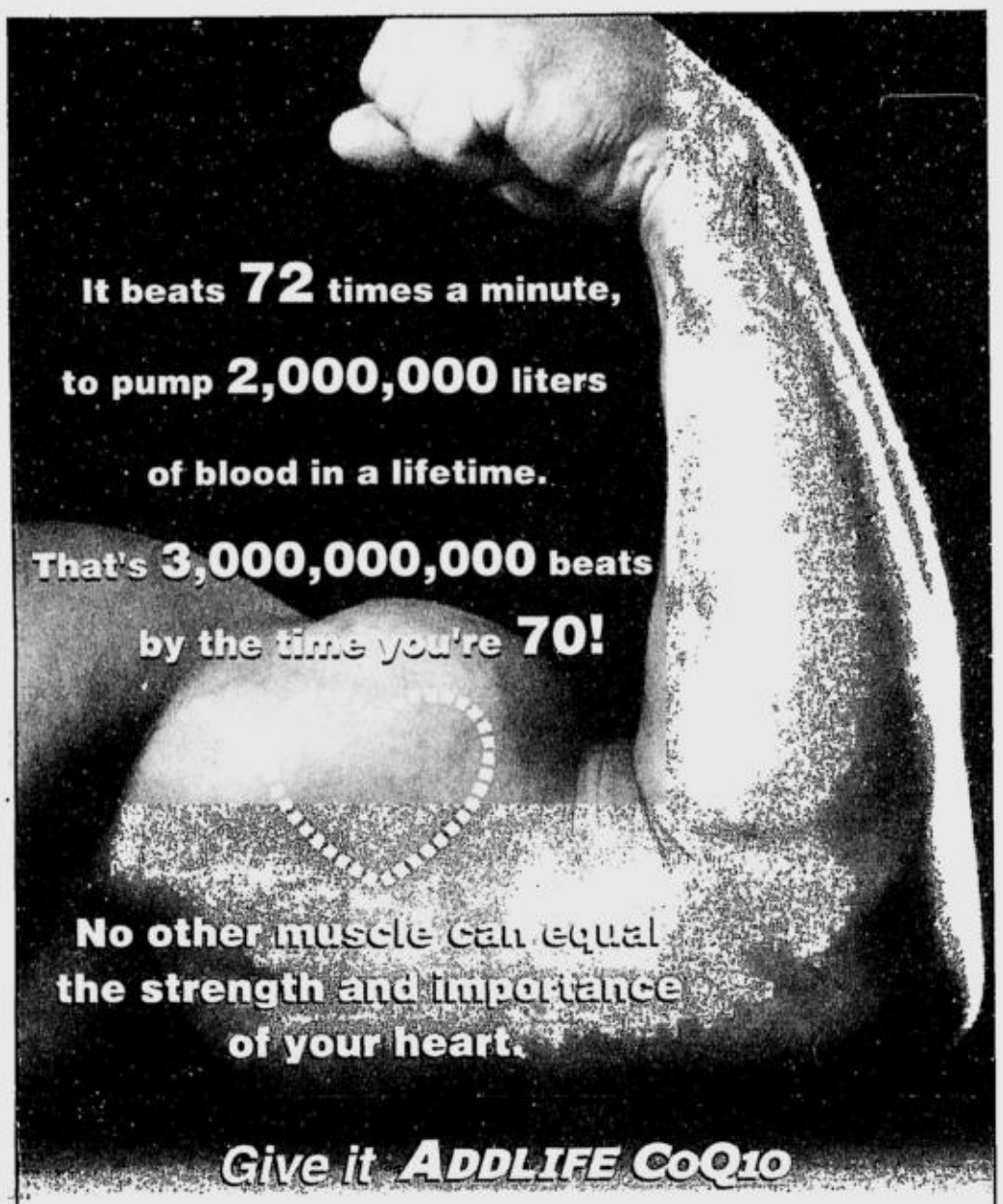

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Can CoQ10 deficiency be responsible for heart diseases?

Although heart diseases are due to a variety of causes-from dietary habits to lifestyle, scientists discovered the presence of increasing symptoms associated with Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) to be correlated with the severity of *CoQ10* deficiency. Other diseases associated with *CoQ10* deficiency are Artherosclerosis/ Ischemic Heart disease, Toxin-induced Cardiomyopathy, Hypertension Arrythmias, Muscular Dystrophy, Cancer (breast, lung, prostate, pancreatic and colon) and even periodontal disease (inflamed gingiva).

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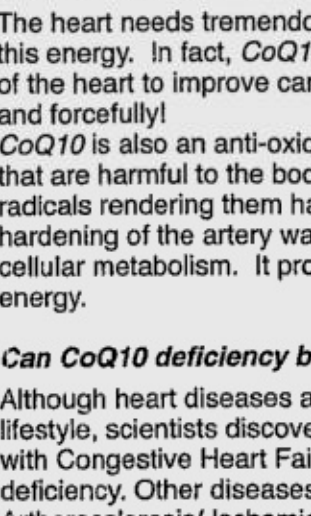

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Ople defends Taiwan jet deal

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE PHILIPPINES has the right to buy military jets from whom it wants without being criticized for it.

Sen. Blas Ople, chair of the Senate committee on foreign relations, thus expressed yesterday displeasure at China's protest over the Philippines' planned purchase of 24 F5-E fighter jets from Taiwan.

"The Philippines as a sovereign nation has the option to refurbish its arsenal as the pressures of security require," Ople said in reaction to a statement from the Chinese Embassy in Manila that expressed Beijing's sentiments against the purchase.

Tong Ziaoling, Chinese deputy chief of mission, called Wednesday on acting Foreign Secretary for Asia-Pacific Antonio Rodriguez to relay China's apprehension over the sale, as well as a supposed plan to let Taiwan use Philippine airspace to train in.

Quoting a top DFA official, Ople said what has Beijing worried are the terms set by Taipei for the sale of the jets at low rates, one of them it to allow Taiwanese fighter pilots to train in Philippine airspace.

Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona denied this, however, saying Taiwanese pilots will only be allowed to fly here while training Philippine pilots.

Taiwan, a tiny island off the coast off gigantic China, lacks the airspace to properly train its pilots who fly state-of-the-art fighter jets, like the American F16 Fighting Falcon and the French Mirage 2000-5.

Tong reportedly told Rodriguez that if the Philippines approves the deal with Taiwan and war broke out in the Taiwan Straits, Taiwan could use the Philippines as a base to launch its fighter jets.

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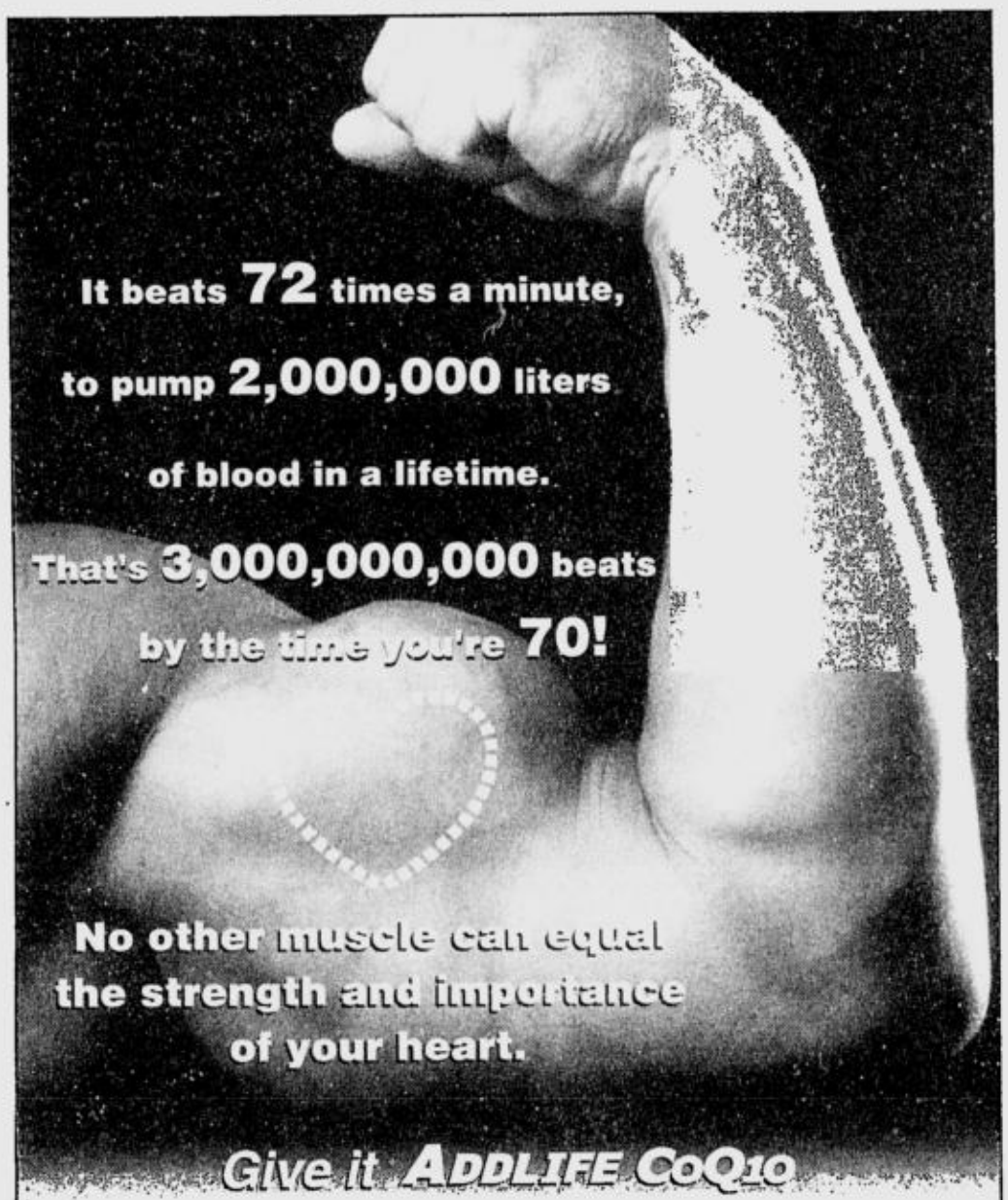

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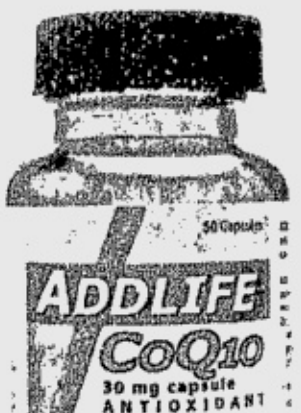

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A United Film Industry for Committed Filipino Cinema

WE, the undersigned Filmmakers and Workers for the Philippine Motion Picture Industry, express our support for Senate Bill No. 2049 creating the Film Development Council of the Philippines, sponsored by Senators Sotto III, Aquino-Oreta, Legarda-Leviste, Villar, Jr., Recto, Ejercito-Estrada, and Osmeña (J.) and House Bill entitled, "An Act Creating the Film Development and Incentives Board, Defining its Powers and Functions, Appropriating Funds Therefor, and for Other Purposes" sponsored by Congressmen Marcos, Villar, Jaraula, Zialcita, Escudero, Vicencio, Andaya, Ledesma, Failon, Barbers, Apostol, Roman, Solis, and Maza.

These Bills seek to create a nurturing economic and cultural environment that will encourage the best in the film industry.

The prohibitively high taxes imposed by both National and Local Governments on the production and exhibition of Filipino films have forced producers into making movies that are primarily geared to make a profit at the box-office.

It is, therefore imperative that a system of tax incentives be initiated in order to encourage and explore the new artistic and economic horizons that the production of alternative and quality Filipino films will bring.

Looking forward to a future of renewed vitality and artistic maturity for the industry with the creation of a new Film Development and Incentives Council, we dedicate ourselves to a Filipino cinema committed to the social and cultural transformation of our people.

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Gov't can't stop Danding from retaking SMC reins

By Donna S. Cueto

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government yesterday said it would have no control over who is able to buy the disputed 47 percent San Miguel Corp. shares allegedly bought with coco levy funds after the Sandiganbayan finally disposes of the coco levy cases.

And whether business tycoon and SMC chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. is able to buy those shares and retain control of the food and beverage conglomerate was a "possibility that is obviously not within the absolute control of the PCGG," PCGG commissioner Ruben Carranza said.

"The courts could rule against the PCGG. SMC shareholders could sell all their shares to Cojuangco," Carranza said.

Even if the courts were to rule that the entire 47 percent block of shares—including the 20 percent being contested by Cojuangco—were public funds, "competitive rules on the disposal of government assets require competitive public bidding," he said.

It was not the PCGG but the law that would decide who would be eligible to bid, Carranza said.

The Supreme Court has already determined that the coco levy funds used to buy 27 percent—out of the disputed 47 percent—SMC shares under the name of the Coconut Industry Investment Fund were "prima facie public funds."

The high tribunal gave the Sandiganbayan six months, or until September, to make a final determination of the nature of the coco levy funds.

The remaining 20 percent

COJUANGCO

shares in Cojuangco's name are still under the control of the Marcos crony who had been deputized to administer the coco levy by dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

The country's small coconut farmers claim that Cojuangco used the funds from the levy, imposed as a tax between 1973 and 1982, to buy the United Coconut Planters Bank, the shares of SMC and other coconut-related businesses and companies under the CIIF.

Denial, again

"Certainly, there will be public policy considerations involved in determining whether Cojuangco will be allowed to bid even if he loses in the cases. When that time comes, PCGG will take its position, taking into account its mandate to recover ill-gotten wealth and the interest of justice," Carranza explained.

The PCGG commissioner denied reports that he ever made an admission that Cojuangco might end up buying the SMC shares under the government's control.

"No such admission was ever made. Saying that the PCGG has not discussed it does not mean that we have not thought about it or that we are for it," Carranza said.

He said that the PCGG was confident that it would recover in the cases now pending before the Sandiganbayan not only the 27 percent SMC shares in the name of the CIIF companies, but also the 20 percent that are in Cojuangco's name.

Pending cases

Because these cases are still pending, Carranza said the PCGG would not be able to dispose of these shares "without either the Sandiganbayan's approval or the consent of all the parties to these cases."

"The fact is that if the entire 47 percent block were to be ultimately recovered and sold by the PCGG, there would be bigger proceeds and greater benefits to small coconut farmers," Carranza explained, allaying the fears of militant farmers' groups opposing the idea.

"Selling off the 27 percent CIIF shares only and at this time while the litigation is still pending has not been considered by the PCGG," he said.

"Evidently, selling now will not generate the maximum value that selling after the litigation is decided in government's favor will generate, especially if the favorable decision covers both blocks of shares," Carranza added.

Health chief's visit excites Tawi-tawi folk

By Armand Nocum

BONGAO, Tawi-tawi—Tawi-tawi province is so close to Malaysia's Sabah state that residents here can access Malaysian television, use the Malaysian ringgit for their currency and entertain idle talk about maybe becoming a part of Malaysia.

Years of neglect by the central authority and the extreme rarity of visits by national officials to this southernmost Philippine island-province may explain the feelings of isolation and resentment of the people here toward "the Manila government."

But for four hours last Friday, people in Tawi-tawi were only too happy to say that perhaps Manila had not forgotten them after all.

"I feel we are very close to Malacañang. President Arroyo loves us. Ma'am Gloria cares for us. She has sent us her health secretary," Marian Talipan, the chair of barangay Pagasinan, said enthusiastically during welcome ceremonies for Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit.

Dayrit had traveled here at the head of a medical team to administer the anti-polio vaccine to children 5 years and below.

Talipan recalled that this was the very first time that a Cabinet secretary had visited the barangay.

Although two former health secretaries, Alfredo Bengzon and Sen. Juan Flavier, had visited Tawi-tawi in the past, they never ventured out of the capital of Bongao.

"Ma'am Gloria remembers us after all," she said again, as children screamed and cried while being given the vaccine even as their mothers held them.

Bongao Mayor Albert T. Kue said the province was so neglected there was only one doctor, a nurse and five midwives attending to the health needs of 35 barangays in his municipality.

Malaria remains the province's No. 1 disease. In fact, Dr. Mila Fernandez, a DOH undersecretary, came down with the disease when she visited Tawi-tawi while still DOH Region IX director some years ago.

Bongao health officer Dr. Al Wajer Himpon said the provincial health staff was capable of handling only minor medical cases. Surgery cases have to be rushed to Zamboanga City, about eight hours away by boat.

At the Datu Halun Hospital, Dr. Redentor T. Rabino, an ophthalmologist who first came to Tawi-tawi in 1993 as a volunteer under the Doctor to the Barrios program, described his place of work as a "50-bed hospital operating like a 100-bed hospital."

The hospital has three surgeons and six nurses to handle the medical needs of the province's 300,000 people.

Noting the "chronic shortage" of medical specialists in Tawi-tawi, Dayrit pledged to increase the number of health personnel in the island-province and improve health facilities there.

But for now, people here were simply happy to see Dayrit who, to them, represented what little bit of attention they could get from far-off Manila.

Japanese hotelier kidnapped, ransomed

By TJ Burgonio

THE JAPANESE owner of a hotel in Cavite province was kidnapped Wednesday and released Friday after payment of ransom, police said yesterday.

Yukio Suzuki, president of the Morase Hotel in Cavite, was seized by three armed men as he was about to enter the guarded community he lives in somewhere in Southern Tagalog, the Agence France Presse said, quoting a police report.

Suzuki was released in Tanauan, Batangas, after payment of the ransom, which police refused to say how much.

The latest abduction of a foreigner came even as the national anti-kidnapping task force reported that the number of kidnap syndicates operating in the country has gone down, even though the number of kidnapping incidents remains high.

A National Anti-Crime Commission Anti-KFR Task Force (Naktaf) official, who asked not to be named, said only 19 kidnap groups were active this year after four gangs were neutralized last year.

Most of the gangs are operating in Metro Manila, he said. Of these, he said, two are composed of former or discharged military men, whom he refused to identify because of pending operations against them.

"The largest among the active groups is the one made up of military scalawags. Another group operates in Manila, Laguna and Batangas. There are also the remnants of the Red Scorpion Gang," the official said.

The Naktaf had reported that the number of abductions as of February stood at 15, the same number recorded in the same period last year. Of these cases, four remain unsolved, the Naktaf had said.

Documents obtained from the national police directorate for community relations, however, indicate that there have been 17 kidnapping incidents from January to March 6 this year and only seven have been solved.

A total of P16.26 million in ransom has reportedly been paid so far to obtain the release of the victims.

Aside from the Japanese businessman, the sister of a Bulacan restaurant owner was reportedly abducted last week and released after her family paid ransom.

Cristina Ramos, sister of the owner of Herminia Restaurant in Malolos, Bulacan, was reportedly freed after her family paid some P50,000 to her kidnappers. *With an AFP report*

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
COMMISSION ON APPOINTMENTS
PASAY CITY

ANNOUNCEMENT

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo has submitted to the Commission on Appointments (C.A.) for confirmation the *ad interim* appointments of the following:

Department of Foreign Affairs

Rosalinda V. Tirona - Chief of Mission, Class I, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Kenya with concurrent jurisdiction over the Republic of Burundi, Federal Islamic Republic of the Comoros, Republic of Djibouti, Federal Republic of Ethiopia, State of Eritrea, Republic of Madagascar, Republic of Malawi, Republic of Mauritius, Republic of Rwanda, Republic of Seychelles, Somalia, United Republic of Tanzania, and Republic of Uganda

Sonia C. Brady - Chief of Mission, Class I, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Royal Kingdom of Thailand and Permanent Representative to the United Nations' Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)

Ernesto C. Castro - Chief of Mission, Class II, as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Republic of Iraq.

Armed Forces of the Philippines

Roy V. Kyamko - to the grade of Major General; **Pedro R. Cabuay, Jr.** - to the grade of Brigadier General; **Gualberto M. Gruspe, PA, Mario G. Taylor, MC** and **Alvin G. Dans, PN-M** (Reserve Inactive) - to the grade of Colonel

The public may submit any information, written report or sworn complaints or oppositions in thirty (30) copies on the above appointments to the CA Secretariat, 6th Floor, PNB Financial Center, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, Metro Manila.

For the schedule of the public hearings, the CA Secretariat can be reached through telephone numbers 551-7532, 831-0893, 831-1824, 834-2706, 831-1566 and 834-2713.

08 March 2002.

ARTURO L. TIU
Secretary

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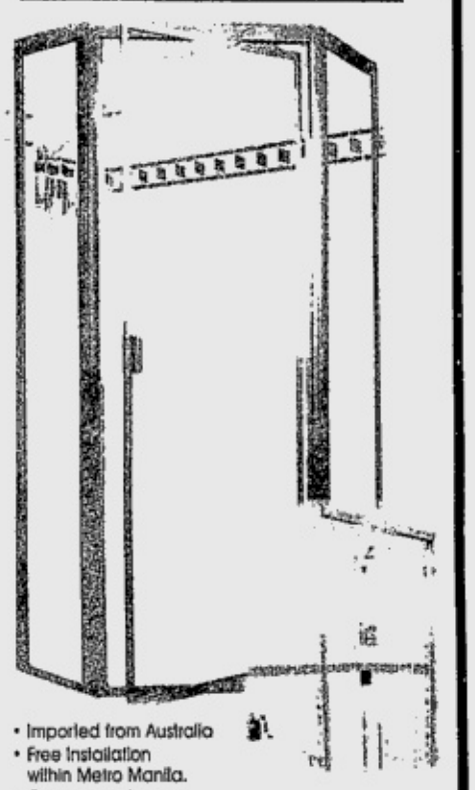

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Vigilante justice

EDITORIAL

UNDER SEVERE stress, the mayor of Maluso in Basilan has decided to take matters into his own hands. To force the Abu Sayyaf to release at least one of its three remaining hostages, Mayor Sakib Salajin ordered his armed followers to kidnap the wives and relatives of Abu Sayyaf bandits. "We kidnapped them so we'll have some bargaining power," he told reporters on Wednesday, when his bodyguards had already abducted eight innocents. "If we don't kidnap them, the rebels will only become stronger."

The prolonged kidnap-for-ransom crisis must have taken its toll on Salajin, because clearly he can no longer tell right from wrong. If he thinks that his kidnapping spree is less evil than that of the bandit group, or that at the very least it is justifiable under the sorry circumstances, he is tragically mistaken. His vigilante justice is not less reprehensible than the Abu Sayyaf's mercenary law of the jungle; it is worse.

For it is not the ransom part that makes the Abu Sayyaf abductions repulsive. (If it were, we would be unmindful of the fate of those coconut plantation farmers and other abductees like them who have no capacity to pay ransom in the first place.) It is—it must be—the kidnapping in itself. An abduction violates the liberty of a person, the very same liberty vouchsafed by the Constitution and which it is the duty of all public officials, from the President down to the hard-pressed mayor of every crisis-rent town, to preserve and protect.

By taking the law into his own hands, therefore, Salajin has violated his oath; he has undermined the very rule of law he was sworn to uphold. He may not demand ransom for his eight hostages, but in his official capacity he has deprived them of their freedom and their dignity: he is misusing them as mere tools of negotiation. This is a crime for which he must be charged and penalized.

But his statements last Wednesday revealed a remarkable sense of being above the law. "(The national government) can't even charge the Abu Sayyaf, so how can they charge us?" he asked. The fact is that many Abu Sayyaf bandits, among them top leader Hector Janjalani, are already being prosecuted under the country's criminal justice system. Salajin's disdain for the facts is a mere reflection of his contempt for the law.

Maybe what he meant is that if Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar had already gotten away with the same thing, why shouldn't he? Akbar had caused the kidnapping of 10 relatives of Abu Sayyaf chieftain Khaddady Janjalani in 2000, to use as leverage for hostage negotiations. To be sure, Akbar did try to preserve appearances, because it was his bodyguard who owned responsibility for the counter-kidnapping strategy. And to be scrupulous about the details, after a few months the hostage swap did work to a certain extent. But what Akbar did was against the law then; what Salajin has done is against the law now.

The answer to the lawlessness sown by the Abu Sayyaf, the Pentagon and other kidnap gangs is not less law, but more. We don't mean "law and order," which is often police shorthand for someone cracking the whip somewhere. We mean the rule of law, which not only divides the immense powers of government but uses those same powers to protect the life, liberty and property of every citizen.

Even military officials acknowledge that kidnappings and other forms of terrorism cannot be resolved by military solutions. One long-standing problem that many have already recognized as a root cause of the hostage crisis is the islanders' deep sense of abandonment, of being perpetual victims of government neglect. But Salajin's cynical ploy to gain "bargaining power" can only serve to reinforce the perception in Basilan that the common people are mere currency of the powers-that-be. It cannot but sharpen differences in a province already on the edge.

The tragedy in Salajin's brand of vigilante justice lies in this: It may weaken the bandits for now, but it will strengthen the causes of banditry in the long term.

The Lacson case again

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

IN THIS column last December, I reported that Sen. Joker Arroyo had called me up to inform me of the latest developments on the Senate investigation of Sen. Panfilo Lacson on charges of drug trafficking and money laundering. Joker was reacting to an earlier article I had written wondering what had happened to the case after the flurry of hearings that had gripped the nation's attention before the investigating committees recessed last year.

Senator Arroyo said that they were dismissing the laundering charge for insufficiency of the evidence so far, but without prejudice to its refiling. However, they were going to render a decision on the drug trafficking charge on which enough evidence had been submitted by the parties. This was being evaluated by a private law firm, whose conclusions were to be considered by the investigating committees for their own report and recommendations to the Senate plenary.

One significant assurance the senator gave me, and which I reported in this column, was that their own decision would be rendered by the middle of January this year. That deadline has come and gone, and there's still no news about Lacson's fate. Many people are waiting for that verdict and, worse, suspecting that it is being intentionally delayed for the senator's benefit. It is now the third month of the year and his case is still shrouded in silence.

I called up Senator Arroyo four weeks ago to ask why there was still no news about the case and reminded him of the information he gave me that it would be decided by the middle of January. He said they were still tying up some loose ends and assured me that the decision would come out soon. This time, though, he did not give me a definite date or even an approximation. At his request, I deferred publishing another article I had written last month about the delay in the Lacson decision.

Well, my friend Joker, it's already March, and the people are still waiting for that verdict. The long delay has released me from my promise not to write about it in the meantime. It looks as if a black curtain has dropped around the Lacson case, and I for one am not inclined to deepen the mystery. I'm afraid I'll have to rake up the coals again to prod the disclosure of that much-awaited verdict.

With things at a standstill and no news from the three Senate committees investigating Senator Lacson, the popular conviction is hardening that the Old Boys' Club is once again closing ranks to protect its own regardless of partisan alignments. I'm certain that Senator Arroyo, chair of one of the three investigating committees, is earnestly trying to speed up their proceedings but apparently without much success. Maybe Senators Robert Barbers and Ramon Magsaysay Jr., heads of the other committees, could help in the effort.

The Lacson case began even before the last election and was deemed submitted for decision after the last hearing (of Reynaldo Acop on Sept. 5, 2001). More than six months have elapsed since then, and the termination of the case with the exoneration or conviction of the respondent is not yet in sight. One can only presume that considerations other than legal have prevented a speedy disposition of this case, which involves the criminal complicity of a high government official in one of the most alarming scandals of the day.

Nothing less than a categorical and immediate decision on the Lacson case can appease the public apprehension that the Senate is temporizing on the fate of one of its members for reasons of its own. Even now, those reasons are under suspicion because of the general lack of confidence in its membership, which includes such improbable characters as a senator drooling grandiose promises to his infant child in a commercial, the ignoramuses who do not know their limitations, and the "silencers" who dare not debate with their colleagues on the floor, for all to hear.

Senator Arroyo is not one of these "honorable" members but is in the mold of the prestigious senators like Quezon, Osmeña, Roxas, Sumulong, Laurel, Recto, Tañada, etc., who earned the nation's admiration. He typifies and is the worthy successor of these brilliant statesmen. He was a fearless lawyer and human rights defender during the Marcos years and the masterful leader of the prosecution panel that impeached Joseph Estrada. His election to the Senate is a well-deserved tribute to an altruistic public servant who has always placed the public welfare above his own.

Still and all, I cannot overstress the need for the decision on the Lacson case that has been stalled these many months while the people wait impatiently. At the very least, we must be informed of the reason for the delay despite the assurance that it would be decided more than a month ago.

I have written many articles in this column about the snail's pace of judicial cases, among them the trial of the Marcos heirs, many of them on their 16th year, and currently, of Joseph Estrada, whose lawyers have withdrawn because of the speeded-up schedule of his long-delayed trial. Finding with dismay that legislative investigations can also creep interminably as in the Lacson case, I can only hope it is not being deliberately prolonged to avoid an adverse decision against "one of the boys."

Zip-lock plastic bag

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

YESTERDAY morning, while preparing my coffee, I happened to see a zip-lock plastic bag, and immediately I knew I found something that best describes what a Pharisee is. In today's Gospel (Jn. 9, 1-41), Jesus healed a man who was blind since birth, and released him from his bondage and darkness. The Pharisees, on the other hand, grilled Him, persecuted Him and tried to silence Him. In other words, they tried to "zip" Him. They were so biased and "locked" in their views that they could not see beyond their rules and tradition. They were so superficial and "plastic" in their attitude, so shallow in their reasoning. Moreover, the Pharisees continuously saddled the people with the strict rules and regulations, literally a bag or a burden to the people. In so far as we zip-lock people, and remain plastic in our ways and attitudes and continue to impose burdens and bags on people, we are modern-day Pharisees.

* * *

A religious experience just happened to the man who was born blind, but the Pharisees failed to recognize it. Why? Because they refused to acknowledge God's presence in the simple, the ordinary. Their sights were fixed on the laws, regulations and public opinion. The Pharisee is one who says, "Far I see."

Are your thoughts always focused on "bigger" and "farther" things in life so that you miss the simple, little and ordinary things happening right under your very nose, right before your very eyes? Careful, you might find out one day that those which you belittled—family, friends, God, health, goodness, values—were after all the big things.

* * *

God speaks to us in very simple ways, in very ordinary events and moments every day. But we often fail to recognize His constant visitations. Why? Because we are not really open and receptive to his stirrings. Or, because we simply refuse. We are masters of flight when it comes to being cornered by the divine. Instead of falling down on our knees and allowing ourselves to be embraced by the light, we would rather comfortably and conveniently fly into the realm of denial, pretense, rationalization or postponement or simply go "*dead-ma*" and go on with our lives as we've lived and planned it. Why does true conversion never really happen? It's because we continue to call the shots.

Don't wait for life to "shoot" you down before you go back to the Lord.

* * *

Are you a zip lock or plastic bag to your family? I know of parents whose only rule in life is to rule and control. They belittle affection, discourage interaction and go right on to kill the spirit in the home. Furthermore, they burden the family with their requirements and constant demands for respect and obedience. All of course in the name of God, law, order and righteousness.

Let us not kill the spirit. Let us not stifle the stirrings of the divine.

Am I a zip-lock plastic parent? Am I a zip-lock plastic politician? Am I zip-lock plastic religious leader? Especially during this season of Lent, let us raise these questions. Let us come before the Lord in humility and allow ourselves to be questioned by Him.

* * *

My constant humble prayer as a priest is that I would never block anyone on his/her way to God. May I continue to show and lead the way toward God's heart. It is very possible that instead of showing the way, I could be blocking the way. May I also recognize that I do not have a monopoly over the way, and that in fact, I must also allow others to show me the way and lead me toward God's heart.

* * *

In stead of holding on to the "zip-lock plastic bag" and "Far I see" attitude, let us learn from Jesus who healed and gave light to the blind man. Let us continue to be open, to encourage, to empower and to enlighten people. Let us continue to liberate rather than burden people.

I will end this with a touching story about two soldiers who found themselves recovering in the same hospital room during World War II. Every day, the one beside the window would describe the outside world to the other soldier who was paralyzed from the neck down. Not only did he share many beautiful and exciting stories about the outside world, he also continued to give cheer and hope to his disabled comrade. Then one morning the soldier beside the window died. Also that morning, the disabled soldier found out that there was nothing outside the window but a wall, and that his friend who had just died was blind.

May we all continue to share the light, show the light and be a light while we are still alive.

* * *

Every March 13, I go to Roxas City to be with the family of my classmate Fr. Tony Barriatos, SVD who died in Paraguay as a missionary in 1993. He has gone out of our sight, but he continues to be a light, an inspiration. As a missionary, Father Tony left his home, family and country, braving loneliness, deprivation, sickness and even persecution for the Gospel. I personally knew Father Tony as a person who always showed the light wherever he went. Father Tony was definitely not a zip-lock plastic missionary priest, but an open, radiant light.

Please continue to pray and support our missionaries.

* * *

A moment with the Lord:

Lord, help me not to be a zip-lock plastic bag but an open, radiant light. Amen.

Do we RSVP for 'People Power IV'?

COMMENTARY

Juan L. Mercado

DON'T look now, but we're being told, indirectly to be sure, to dust off our marching togs. It's for "People Power IV." And if former President Estrada's *spinmeisters* are right, it's just around the corner.

The message of their calibrated alerts is consistent: Erap is being screwed up by the courts. So, the young and not so young (that's us) may be summoned to reassemble at the barricades. It will be sooner rather than later, they add—with a wink.

The ousted president's stalking horses in the Lower House flag this message. So do some of the "Craven Eleven" senators, among them Blas Ople, Gregorio Honasan and Tito Sotto.

These "honorable" lawmakers suppressed evidence in the second envelope during Estrada's impeachment trial. In fact, their moral bankruptcy triggered People Power II.

"Though locked up in steel," Henry VI insists, "he is naked...whose conscience with injustice is corrupted." But these legislators are of a grosser breed. Panfilo Lacson graduated with honors from Marcos' dreaded Metrocom Intelligence Service Group torture chamber. He doesn't lose sleep over these "trifles."

Thus, they darkly mutter: when called to march, rally, protest—and if need be, lay down your lives—could you please RSVP? Who to?

They're not kidding. This is **the** Jose Velarde everyone has been looking for, ever since the impeachment trial fell apart. Why, even former President Estrada denied ("cross my heart") knowing anybody by that name.

In a TV interview with ANC's Pia Hontiveros, Jose Velarde cheerfully admitted signing, as such, on that notorious bank card, tucked into a trial envelope. At its peak, that account strained, at the seams, with P3.2 billion in deposits.

Jueteng doesn't produce such sums. But it's never been proven either that it was laundered money from drugs.

Prosecutor and now Sen. Joker Arroyo did demonstrate the depositor opened the account with P1—enough for Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta to do a "Salome" on nationwide TV.

Jose Velarde candidly admits he sometimes signs differently. Schizophrenia has nothing to do with this. It all depends on the role he emotes. When president, he'd scribble Joseph Ejercito Estrada. Look at the P500-bill in your wallet.

But in bank documents, sealed by the vote of the "Craven Eleven," he wasn't acting as president. Instead, he played "guarantor" for a P500-million loan for crony William Gatchalian.

"Consistency is the hobgoblin of small minds." True. But in the event, Jose Velarde signed as Jose Velarde.

Now, that's a first in Philippine banking history. No one before ever guaranteed P500 million of his own money. Still, was **that** what Juan Ponce Enrile, Nikki Coseteng and Miriam Defensor-Santiago laid down their senatorial careers for?

The Marcoses submitted false signatures—"Jane Saunders" and "William Ryan"—for their Swiss bank accounts. All the more reason we should take a deep breath before texting our RSVPs to Jose Velarde. Or alias?

And what is people power for anyway?

Look at Czechoslovakia's six-week long "Velvet Revolution." It erupted three years after Edsa—and 50 years to the day when Czechs first gathered at Wenceslas Square to protest the Nazi occupation. From November to December, Czechs shattered a communist dictatorship. The battles were not over house arrest privileges.

Marching from Prague's National Cemetery, Czechs demanded liberty of expression—which Erap uses here to the full, to assail the courts. And corruption never tainted Vaclav Havel.

Bus No. 105 can drop you at a Beijing subway that exits at Tiananmen Square. There, in 1999, "People Power" was brutally suppressed.

Again, the issues were about people—to use Mao Zedong's phrase—"forbidden to light lamps." It was not about lodging over 130 motions to delay answering criminal charges.

Solidarsnoc's uprising, in the Gdansk shipyard of Poland, led to "21 Demands." Defiantly proclaimed by Lech Walesa, they sought democratic space. Number one was the right to organize freely. Nothing for themselves.

Rene Saguisag, meanwhile, quotes from Nelson Mandela's "Long Walk to Freedom" to justify why defense lawyers jettisoned Estrada (or Velarde). Mandela's counsel walked out of the Military Commission, he recalls, to protest the "inequalities of state emergency." Fair enough.

But there's no emergency here. And Velarde is no Mandela. In 1993, Mandela won the Nobel Peace Prize (an honor he shared with Willem de Klerk) for "exemplifying a moral integrity that goes beyond South Africa...in dismantling apartheid."

Erap, in contrast, fights for bottle, mistresses, cronies—and his knees. You doubt that? Read fired Malacañang Chief of Staff Aprodicio Lacquian's latest book.

From 1962 to 1990, Mandela stoically endured unjust detention. Ninoy Aquino, Jose Diokno and Teodoro Locsin Sr. were of the same mold. They didn't whimper either. What about Erap?

"All democracies fear...a surrender to the voices of ignorance," Harvard's John Kenneth Gailbraith writes. Recall the May 1 riots outside Malacañang.

Thus, I'll RSVP to Jose Velarde (a.k.a. Estrada): For your "People Power IV," I'll take a rain check.

DEPTHnews

A continuing struggle

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

MGA kababayang tunay na kapatid,/tunghayan ang aming tapat na paghibik,/tapunan ng awa't mahabag sa tingin/nang mga babayeng dito'y nagsititik. (Countryfolk and true siblings/pay heed to our sincere cries/throw us some pity and look with compassion/on the women who have written this.)

Thus begins "Hibik Namin," the "versified manifesto" upon which award-winning writer Bienvenido Lumbera based the *sarsuwela* "Hibik at Himagsik nina Victoria Lactaw."

Nine women of Lipa, who gave themselves the names Victoria Lactaw, Felipa Kapuloan, Feliza Kahatol, Victoria Mausig, Patricia Himagsik, Salvadora Dimagiba, Dolores Katindig, Honorata Dimaiuga and Deodata Liwanag, claimed authorship of the verses denouncing the rape of Filipino women by American soldiers at the height of the Philippine-American War. In his *sarsuwela*, Lumbera imagines the reasoning behind their decision to act boldly and collectively, though anonymously.

After hearing about the rape of sisters Pinang and Sabel, the women, who have joined their rebel menfolk in the mountains of Batangas, decide they must make a public denunciation of this outrage. But to speak directly of the rape of the sisters, they fear, might only bring shame to the victims. They thus decide to address the issue indirectly, in verse, and to protect each other, they all claim authorship, veiling their identities with allegorical pen names.

Listening to this argument onstage, I marveled at how accurately it reflected the social stigma that haunts women victims of sexual violence even to this day. Though it must have been even more of a daunting prospect for the Pinangs and Sabels of their time. And how courageous of the young women, all daughters of Lipa's respected families, to use their collective influence to both protect Pinang and Sabel while denouncing the wrong done them.

* * *

"HIBIK at Himagsik" opens at a time of innocence and gaiety, though clouds of revolution and war cast a pall over the young people's sunny days. Chayong is a young woman of accomplishment, a noted versifier and natural leader. She and Bindoy, a student in Manila, nurse a budding romance that must be postponed as history swirls around them.

In the course of a birthday celebration for a beloved *maestra*, Chayong, Bindoy and their friends hear news of Aguinaldo's arrest in Palayan and the takeover of the revolutionary leadership by Gen. Miguel Malvar, who is setting up his headquarters in the mountains of his native Batangas. Though the men resist mightily, Chayong and the other members of the Dama de Cruz Roja (Dames of the Red Cross) insist on joining them in their flight to the mountains.

After a rousing tableau for the visiting General Malvar at the mountain camp, their high spirits are dashed as Pinang and Sabel drop by and tell of their sufferings at the hands of the Americans. After deciding to denounce the atrocity, the women are urged to abandon camp as a band of American soldiers and their native stooges had been spotted nearby. Choosing to guide the catatonic Pinang, Chayong is separated from the rest of the group. In the course of a chase, Pinang falls into a ravine and Chayong falls into the hands of American soldiers.

* * *

ACT 3 opens with the same young women gathered in Chayong's home. But where before their gatherings were marked by camaraderie and friendship, this time they are subdued and distant.

Only when Pinang's death comes up does Chayong finally tell her friends what happened in the mountains. Even as she was writing their poem, she says, she was also telling her story, as she had been used as a sex slave by the American soldiers. Bindoy, without a word of farewell, has returned to Manila to resume his studies. Chayong in fact is still under house arrest, supervised by Lieutenant Norris who keeps an eye on her in the guise of giving English lessons.

After a heated argument between Chayong's brother and Norris, who should come calling but Bindoy, remorseful and begging for forgiveness. But Chayong has made up her mind. While forgiving Bindoy, she tells him their love must wait as there is a colonial power they must overthrow. "Hibik at Himagsik" ends with the young folk choosing to leave once more to join the remaining revolutionary forces.

* * *

TO BE honest, I had gone to the Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero Theater expecting an "amateur" production. Instead, what I witnessed was a production astounding in its complexity and the skill of its talented cast.

Outstanding were Michelle Montero as the deceptively fragile Chayong and Arnold Reyes as Bindoy. I was beguiled as well by the voice of Lyra Dominguez as Sabel. A mix of budding professionals and voice and drama students, the young cast was buttressed quite capably by stage veterans Gamaliel Viray, Sonia Valenciano and Edna Mae Landicho.

Director Alexander Cortez must be credited for choreographing the rather "busy" stage action with precision and verve. I must say, too, that I was quite impressed with the stage design, especially the revolving doors, but understood why when I saw Salvador Bernal in the credits. Lucien Letaba must likewise be credited for setting Lumbera's engaging lyrics to memorable music.

The closing performance was attended mainly by students. Clearly, they were uncomfortable with, if not disdainful of, the *sarsuwela* format, laughing at the most inappropriate moments. My only hope is that they left the theater bearing in mind the message about our continuing struggle for liberation, even as they must learn to overcome their intolerance for unfamiliar stage genres.

Pragmatic solutions

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

FOUR elders of our political community, all masters in the art of pragmatic politics, met recently to find a solution to the problem created by the withdrawal of former President Joseph Estrada's lawyers from the cases filed against him. They are traversing the thin line between law and politics.

Senators Blas Ople, Edgardo Angara and Aquilino Pimentel Jr., and Speaker Jose de Venecia are looking for a formula that will defuse a volatile political situation while protecting the long-term integrity of our legal institutions. They are convinced that our country faces a dangerous impasse that can only be avoided if we relax our rigid standpoints.

The option they are looking at is virtual exile for the former president. He will be allowed to leave the country under the cover of a necessary surgery to be performed abroad. The trial will be suspended until his return from medical treatment. His stay abroad may be short or it may be indefinitely long. What happens later should not concern us at the moment, they seem to say. The important thing is that the impasse is sidestepped so that the nation can refocus its attention on more essential problems.

The unstated assumptions of this proposal are worth examining. If we try to understand them carefully, we may be able to decide more easily how to act and what to expect in the days or weeks to come.

I think its first premise is that Erap is politically finished in the sense that his return to the presidency is simply no longer possible. Like a badly wounded fighting cock that can no longer defend itself, he should be allowed to retreat honorably and fade away. The second premise is that, even as his political future is now blank, Erap still commands a large following that can create trouble for the government. From the ranks of the poor who voted him into office in 1998, many believe, to this day, that he could have been their savior if the elite had not unjustly removed him. These Erap true believers form an explosive element in our society. The sooner we stop "persecuting" their hero by releasing him from detention, the quicker it may be to appease their anger.

Modernists, like those who fought at the two Edsas, may share these premises but they vehemently disagree with the conclusions drawn. They think that, yes, Erap is politically finished, but he should be brought to justice for his crimes because he will not quietly fade away. To allow him to walk free now even before the courts have tried him is to mock our system of justice and to make it difficult in the future to enforce our laws against the powerful holders of public office. And, yes, unfortunately, he may well still enjoy some support among the poor. But the basis of this support—money and patronage—is the very thing we want to root out of our political life. The issue strikes at the very core of the social reforms we have been fighting for since the first Edsa. We must face the issue head-on, even if it may mean civil war, if we want to mature as a nation.

I personally think the time for political "backchanneling" is over. The four wise men of Congress should have thought of this before Erap was arrested. The former president is now under the jurisdiction of the courts. The more the legislature and the executive exert pressure on the courts, the harder and more necessary it will be for the judicial branch to preserve its integrity and credibility as an institution. The legal resolution now rests solely with the courts, whereas the political initiative—any move to resolve the situation by extra-constitutional means—may be taken anytime by the Estrada forces.

The courts have no choice now but to let the trial take its course. This means that they must keep the accused under custody, unless they decide to free him on bail or allow him, on humanitarian grounds, to seek medical treatment abroad. The question, however, is whether the courts can do any of these at this time without appearing to have succumbed to political pressure or blackmail. By impugning the integrity and independence of the Sandiganbayan and even the Supreme Court itself, Erap has boxed himself into a corner. His supporters may decide to free him forcibly, and we just have to face up to that possibility.

A scenario that I would like to see is something like this: Erap recalls his lawyers, a reasonable compromise is reached on trial schedules, the trial resumes and the pending motions are quickly resolved. The Sandiganbayan may deny Erap's request to seek medical treatment abroad but it grants Jinggoy Estrada's petition to post bail. The accused keeps his room at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center where he is confined and is accorded all the respect that is due him as former president. The trial proceeds with full transparency. Politicians and the media refrain from passing judgment on the merits of the cases.

Two things are on trial today, I think. The first is our ability to maintain an institutionalized system of justice that is fair and transparent. The second is our ability to resolve political disagreements without killing one another. These abilities are not governed by the exact sciences; their practice more properly belongs to the realm of art.

Running a nation is a balancing act between the requirements of modern law and the imperatives of culture. There is no place for absolutism—whether legal, moral or political. To fail to see this is to risk losing the nation.

* * *

Comments to rdavid@pacific.net.ph

Forgotten persona in the plunder case

COMMENTARY

Raul J. Palabrica

IF there were a "best acting" award for 2002 in the legal profession, the lawyers of former President Estrada would win it hands down.

In front of the cameras and reporters, they proclaim loss of confidence in our judicial system. They believe their client will not get justice from the Sandiganbayan or the Supreme Court. So they have withdrawn from his case.

Out of the limelight and in the privacy of their offices, the script is different. They continue to represent other clients in their legal problems. They address the judges hearing the cases of these clients with respect. They don't treat them with contempt as they are now doing to the Sandiganbayan justices.

Of course, in the process of seeking redress for the grievances of their clients or defending them, they get paid for their services. The attorney's fees pay for their comfortable lifestyle, elegant offices and other amenities in life.

In other words, as Estrada's counsel, they don't want to have anything to do with a "corrupt and politicized" judicial system. But as lawyers for low-profile clients, they continue to believe the courts will be able to render justice to them. Neat. Very neat.

During the late 1960s, a well-known trial lawyer by the name of Jose Palarca was dismayed by what he considered a gross injustice done by a judge to his client in a case. He used strong words in his pleadings to protest the actions of the judge. But the judge continued to deny his motions.

Characteristic of the high moral integrity of the lawyers of his era, he filed a petition with the Supreme Court returning his Certificate of Admission to the Bar (meaning, he wanted to stop practicing his profession) to express his disgust with the failure of the court to render justice to his client.

Disallowed

Palarca did not want to have anything to do with an institution that he felt was not living up to the purpose for which it was created. Unfortunately, he did not get his wish. Instead, the tribunal admonished him to be more patient with the legal system and cautioned him against the use of harsh language in dealing with the courts.

The principled stand of the lawyer won him the admiration of many lawyers. In the words of a veteran lawyer, he was a true *caballero*, the highest accolade a lawyer can receive from his peers during those halcyon years.

Palarca put his money where his mouth was. He was not afraid to lose his shirt or put his family in financial distress to prove the seriousness of his tirades against the judiciary.

Whether or not the same kind of principled courage applies to the present generation of lawyers, in particular, to Estrada's lawyers, remains to be seen.

Pull-out

With Estrada's original defense team no longer representing him at the Sandiganbayan, (although still very much in the publicity picture), the lawyers of co-accused Jinggoy Estrada—Jose Flaminiano, Rene Saguisag and Cleofe Versola—are reportedly planning to withdraw also from handling the son's defense.

This is a reversal of their earlier announcement that they would continue to represent him in the plunder case. The implication of this continued lawyering activity is simple. They do not have faith in the judicial system as far as Estrada is concerned, but with regard to his son, they think the system is just fine.

For some unexplained reasons, the three lawyers may have realized the adverse effects, if not, folly, of their ambivalent action, hence, their plan to pack up and leave the court premises.

And rightly so, because no matter how they try to make it appear that they are there only for Jinggoy's defense, the people will always think that their continued appearance is an indirect way of protecting also the interests of their principal client who does not believe in the integrity of the judicial system.

Just as there is no such thing as a "half-pregnant woman," a lawyer is either a participant in a court proceeding or not. There are no two ways about it.

Dilemma

Amid the controversy generated by the withdrawal of Estrada's lawyers from his case, there is one person in the equation who has been unheard from but whose comments on the issue are worth listening to. This is Edward Serapio.

In case you have forgotten, he is the lawyer who acted as corporate secretary of the Muslim Youth Foundation, the alleged recipient of part of the *jueteng* money that former Gov. Chavit Singson collected and delivered to Estrada.

Serapio graduated valedictorian of his class at the Ateneo College of Law. He placed seventh in the 1985 bar examinations. He took up further studies at his alma mater's Graduate School of Business to widen his knowledge of corporate law. His credentials are the envy of many lawyers.

For more than 10 months now, he has been confined at Camp Crame. His detention cell may not have the same amenities as that of the client he once served, but it is a lot better than the Quezon City Jail where he and his other co-accused should be, strictly speaking, staying.

If he follows the lead of Estrada and denounce the judiciary and withdraw his lawyers, he runs the risk of being found guilty, getting disbarred, or both. He knows his own lawyers, his former partners in his law office, have the experience and dedication needed to get him out of the rut he is presently stuck in. It would be reckless of him to entrust his fate to court-appointed lawyers if he reprises the "disappearing" act of Estrada's lawyers. Life behind bars, no matter how short, will be emotionally and financially disastrous to him and his young family.

If Serapio spews the same venom spouted by Estrada's lawyers against the judiciary, he could find himself facing contempt and disbarment charges. As an officer of the court, he is obliged to respect its proceedings and comply with its orders.

Any act of disrespect or insolence before the courts could earn him a rebuke that may eventually lead to the loss of his license to practice his profession. If that happens, all the years he spent studying and mastering the law will go down the drain.

By keeping silent on the issue, we do not know if Serapio agrees with the unconventional moves and contemptuous attitude of his co-accused's lawyers, or he believes he can get his rightful share of justice in our court system.

He is caught in a gut-wrenching dilemma. If he says amen to Estrada's lawyers, he will put his life, family and profession in serious peril. If he takes a different course, he may find himself the target of vengeance of an erstwhile client who may not like the idea of his former lawyer contradicting him on an issue he considers the key to his survival.

Serapio must be regretting the day he was introduced to Estrada.

Please send feedback to opinion@inquirer.com.ph

TALK OF THE TOWN

Editor Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

Can Erap run in 2004?

YES, he can, says Miriam Defensor Santiago, former chair of the Senate committee on constitutional amendments, revision of codes and laws. Santiago is responding to a "Talk of the Town" questionx "Can Erap run in 2004 if the Sandigabayan has not yet ruled on his cases?"

The possibility of Estrada running for reelection has not been raised in public by legislators, who are either pushing for his medical treatment abroad or for his exile.

Some claim that Estrada has resorted to delaying his trial in the Sandiganbayan by firing his lawyers and questioning the integrity of the country's justice system so that the anti-graft court can't rule on his cases before 2004. By delaying the Sandiganbayan's ruling, Estrada can support a presidential candidate, some say action star Fernando Poe Jr., who is sympathetic to him. This scenario has given rise to text messages calling it a battle between "ang panday" and "ang pandak."

But Santiago says Estrada can still run for reelection because he was not able to serve out his six-year term. She notes that the former President did not voluntarily renounce the presidency. "What he transmitted to Congress was his written declaration that he was unable to discharge his powers and duties of his office," she says.

Santiago points out that the Supreme Court ruling that Estrada has resigned only applies to the military coup d'etat that ousted him and not to the 2004 elections.

A member of the 1986 Constitutional Commission holds the opposite view. Wilfrido Villacorta says Estrada can no longer run because the Constitution provides that "the President shall not be eligible for any reelection."

'A partial-term President can seek reelection'

By Miriam Defensor Santiago
Doctor of the Science of Law
Former U.P. Professor
of Constitutional Law

FORMER President Estrada can run for reelection in the 2004 elections. The applicable law is found in the Constitution, Article 7 on the Executive Department, which provides: Section 4. The President and the Vice President shall be elected...for a term of six years... The President shall not be eligible for any reelection. No person who has succeeded as President and has served as such for more than four years shall be qualified for election to the same office at any time.

No Vice President shall serve for more than two successive terms. Voluntary renunciation of the office for any length of time shall not be considered an interruption in the continuity of the service for the full term for which he was elected.

Every great constitutional issue is resolved by the construction of the Constitution. The term "construction" means the process of drawing a conclusion on a subject that lies beyond the direct expressions of the text. It is similar to the term "interpretation," which is the process of finding out the true sense of words.

Rule of intent

Constitutional construction is carried out under certain rules. The most basic rule is: the intent of both the framers and adopters is controlling. It is easy to apply this rule, if the intent is clearly expressed in the Constitution itself. But if such intent is not clearly expressed, then the provision must be interpreted to harmonize with the purpose contemplated at the time the Constitution was adopted. This basic rule is accompanied by another basic rule: construction should be based on the purpose sought to be accomplished.

Hence, the threshold issue is: What was the intent of the 1986 Constitutional Commission, and of the Filipino people who ratified their work? The language of Section 4, Sentence 1 implies that the intent was to prevent the President from serving more than six years. The framers and adopters had various reasons behind this intent. The most obvious reason is that power corrupts. If the President has already served out his six-year term, he is disqualified from remaining in power so that, despite himself, he will be prevented from succumbing to the temptations of power.

When they wrote Section 4, Sentence 1, the framers made an arbitrary judgment that a single term of six years is the limit for a President's resistance to corruption. Therefore, if a President, through no wish of his own, is not able to serve out the six years, then the philosophy behind the six-year term no longer applies. In other words, the intent is that Section 4, Sentence 1, covers a President who has served out his six-year term. Since Mr. Estrada has not served six years because of circumstances outside his control, then he falls outside the coverage of Sentence 1.

Rule against absurdity

Section 4, Sentence 2, provides: "The President shall not be eligible for any reelection." Sentence 2 is ambiguous, because it does not specify what kind of President it covers: a normal, full-term President; or a partial-term (deposed) President. Sentence 2 fails to specify, because the constitutional framers never contemplated a situation where a President would be removed by a military coup d'etat, instead of by conviction after an impeachment trial.

In any event, the rule is that words appearing in a Constitution are presumed to have been used in their usual meaning. The usual meaning of "the President" is one who is serving a normal full term. At most, "the President" refers to one who has been convicted after an impeachment trial, and subsequently convicted after a criminal trial. These are the possible categories covered by the term "the President." The Constitution never contemplated a President deposed by coup d'etat, simply because a coup d'etat is unconstitutional, and is defined as a crime by the Penal Code.

There is another rule of constitutional construction: *Ubi lex non distinguit, nec nos distinguere debemus*. Where the law does not distinguish, we ought not to distinguish. But there is an exception, when refusal to distinguish will result in an absurdity. The rule is that there should be no construction of language that leads to absurd, unreasonable or impractical results.

Section 4 allows a successor President to run for reelection, if she has served for less than four years. Therefore, by implication, an elected President can also run for reelection, if he has served for less than four years, and has not been convicted. Otherwise, the result is to give a privilege to a mere successor, while denying it to a duly elected President, which is an absurd result.

To avoid absurdity, a distinction needs to be drawn between a full-term and a partial-term President. A full-term President, even if he made a voluntary renunciation, cannot run for reelection. Therefore, a partial-term President can run again.

Rule of ordinary meaning

Section 4, Sentence 5 provides: "Voluntary renunciation of the office for any length of time shall not be considered an interruption in the continuity of the service for the full term for which he was elected." The applicable rule of constitutional construction is that words appearing in a Constitution are presumed to have been used according to their ordinary, plain, natural and usual signification and import. This means, according to the US Supreme Court, that the interpretation given to a constitutional provision must be the sense most obvious to common understanding.

Sentence 5 applies both to the President and the Vice President, for the simple reason that Sentence 5 does not state that it is applicable to the Vice President alone. Moreover, Sentence 5 implies that even if the President has not served for six years, he will still be disqualified from reelection, if his failure to serve the full term has been due to his voluntary renunciation. Mr. Estrada never made a voluntary renunciation of the presidency; what he transmitted to Congress was his written declaration that he was unable to discharge the powers and duties of his office.

This is provided for by Article 7, Section 11. In that case, the Vice President becomes the Acting President, but only until the President transmits a written declaration that he is already able to discharge the powers of his office.

The Supreme Court has ruled that Mr. Estrada has, in effect, resigned. However, the Supreme Court decision applies only to its own facts: the military coup d'etat that ousted Mr. Estrada. What we are dealing with here is another set of facts: the 2004 elections. The issue is: "Did Mr. Estrada make a voluntary renunciation of the presidency?" If he did, then he can no longer run for reelection.

Mr. Estrada never made a voluntary renunciation of the presidency.

In fact, from the first opportunity until the present, he has consistently declared, insisted and argued that he was elected as President, that he remains as President, and that he intends to reclaim the presidency at some future time, by transmitting a written declaration that he is already able to discharge the power of his office, pursuant to Article 7, Section 11.

To claim that he has made a voluntary renunciation is to violate another rule of constitutional construction. The rule is that technical or legal words and phrases should necessarily be given a technical or legal significance. In our Constitution, the term "voluntary" is a legal term. It should be interpreted according to its legal meaning. Black's Law Dictionary, 7th edition 1999, defines the term "voluntary" as: "done by design or intention; unconstrained by interference; not impelled by outside influence."

Under this definition, it is the intent of the person, which determines whether his act is voluntary or not. Naturally, the best authority on what Mr. Estrada's intention was is Mr. Estrada himself. According to him, he never intended to resign. He left Malacañang, under compulsion of a military coup d'etat. He left Malacañang, not the presidency. Malacañang is not synonymous with the presidency. If it were so, then any mob can reverse the results of a presidential election simply by storming Malacañang and forcing any newly elected President to leave the premises.

Further, Article 7, Section 8 provides for the resignation of the President, but fails to specify the procedure to be followed. We are therefore bound by the law dictionary definition of the term "resignation."

Black's Law Dictionary defines resignation as "a formal notification of relinquishing an office or position." A formal resignation is one which follows an established procedure rule, custom or practice.

In Philippine administrative practice, a formal resignation means a written resignation. In the United States, a formal resignation by the President is covered by the US Code, Title 3, Section 20, which provides: "Resignation of Office. The only evidence...of a resignation of the office of President..., shall be an instrument in writing, declaring the same, and subscribed by the person resigning." Again, while analogous American law is not decisive in our country, it is authoritative or at least instructive, when there is a gap in Philippine law.

Technical rules

The entire system of law is nothing but a set of technicalities because our civilization has learned that technicalities are the best way to administer justice. If certain people do not agree with this system of law, they can try to invent another civilization. But while we claim to operate under a system of law, we have to follow what the law says. The Constitution is interpreted according to the technical rules of constitutional construction. The basic rules are well-established.

When we apply the rules and produce a certain result, it is valid from the legal standpoint. For those who wish to debate the results, the best thing to do is to take the subject away from the legal sphere, and bring it to another sphere, such as morality or public policy. But when we debate a legal proposition, we should debate on legal terms. Otherwise, the issues will never meet. *Contra negantem principia non est disputandum*. There is no disputing against one who denies first principles.

'Did Mr. Estrada make a voluntary renunciation of the presidency? If he did, then he can no longer run. But he never made a voluntary renunciation of the presidency'

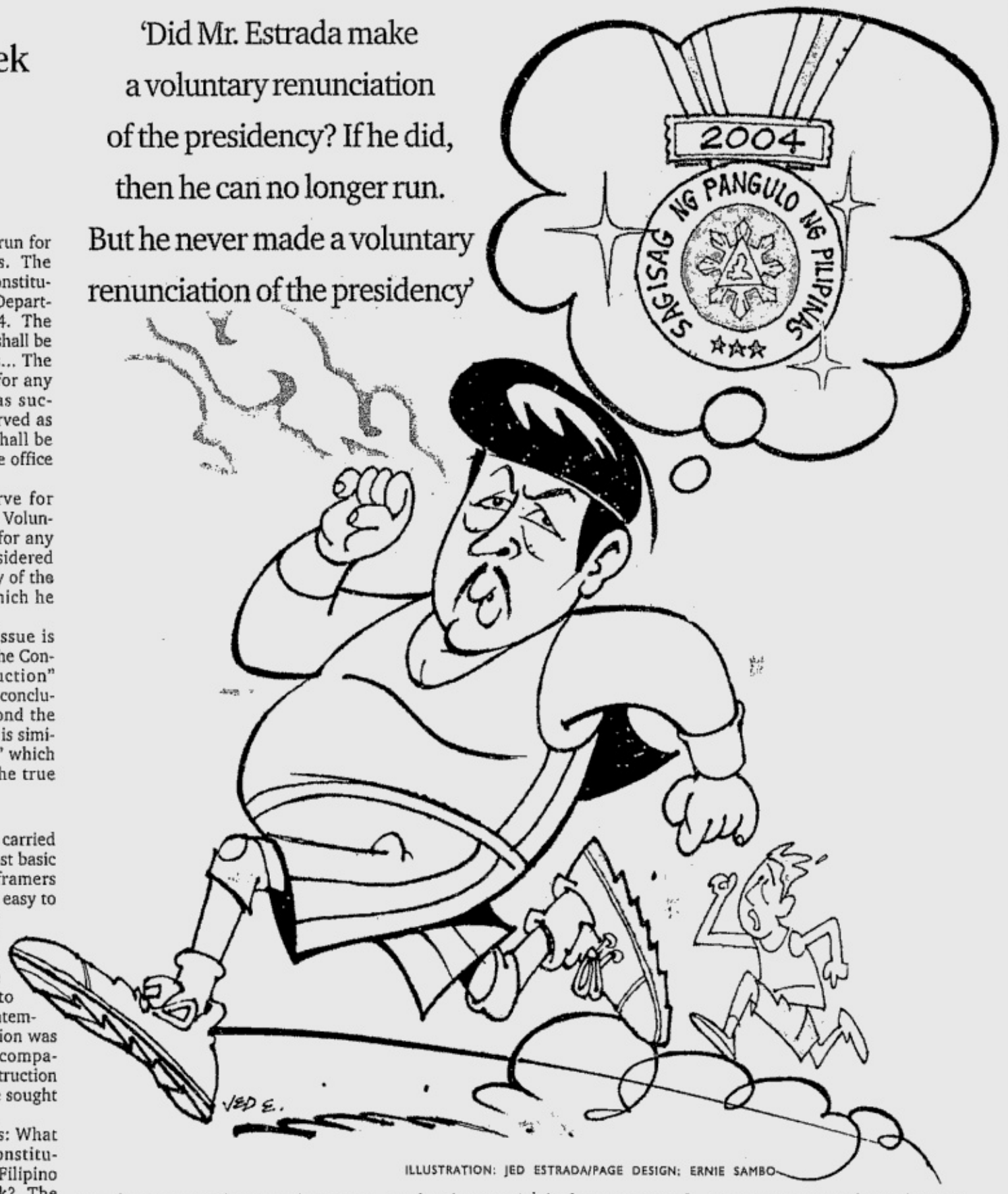

ILLUSTRATION: JED ESTRADA/PAGE DESIGN: ERNIE SAMBO

'The Constitution bans a second term'

By Wilfrido V. Villacorta, Ph.D.
Member, 1986 Constitutional Commission

THE CONSTITUTION is clear about the reelection ban on former presidents: "The President shall not be eligible for any reelection (Article VII, Sec. 4)." But even if this provision is amended to allow for presidential reelection, the basic question is whether the people should still vote for someone who has brought the nation's economy into near-collapse, who has proven his incapacity to govern, and who is now trying to undermine the entire judicial system.

Having said this, I still believe that there is something good left in every person. I pray that Erap will reconsider his moves to destabilize our nation. I hope that he will finally demonstrate his avowed love for the masses by ordering his followers to stop manipulating the poor who are the ultimate victims of social and economic instability.

He should credit his countrymen with a little more intelligence and be reminded that one cannot fool all the people all the time. The way to recover honor lost is to humbly accept one's errors, make retribution and resolve to tread a new path. You can do it, Erap. Remember the example of your parents. The idealism of the people who believed in you. Do not go in the way of the fallen dictator. If you still want to leave behind a legacy that your family and people will treasure, please remember what Rizal wrote in *Fili:* "The glory of saving a country is not for him who has contributed to its ruin."

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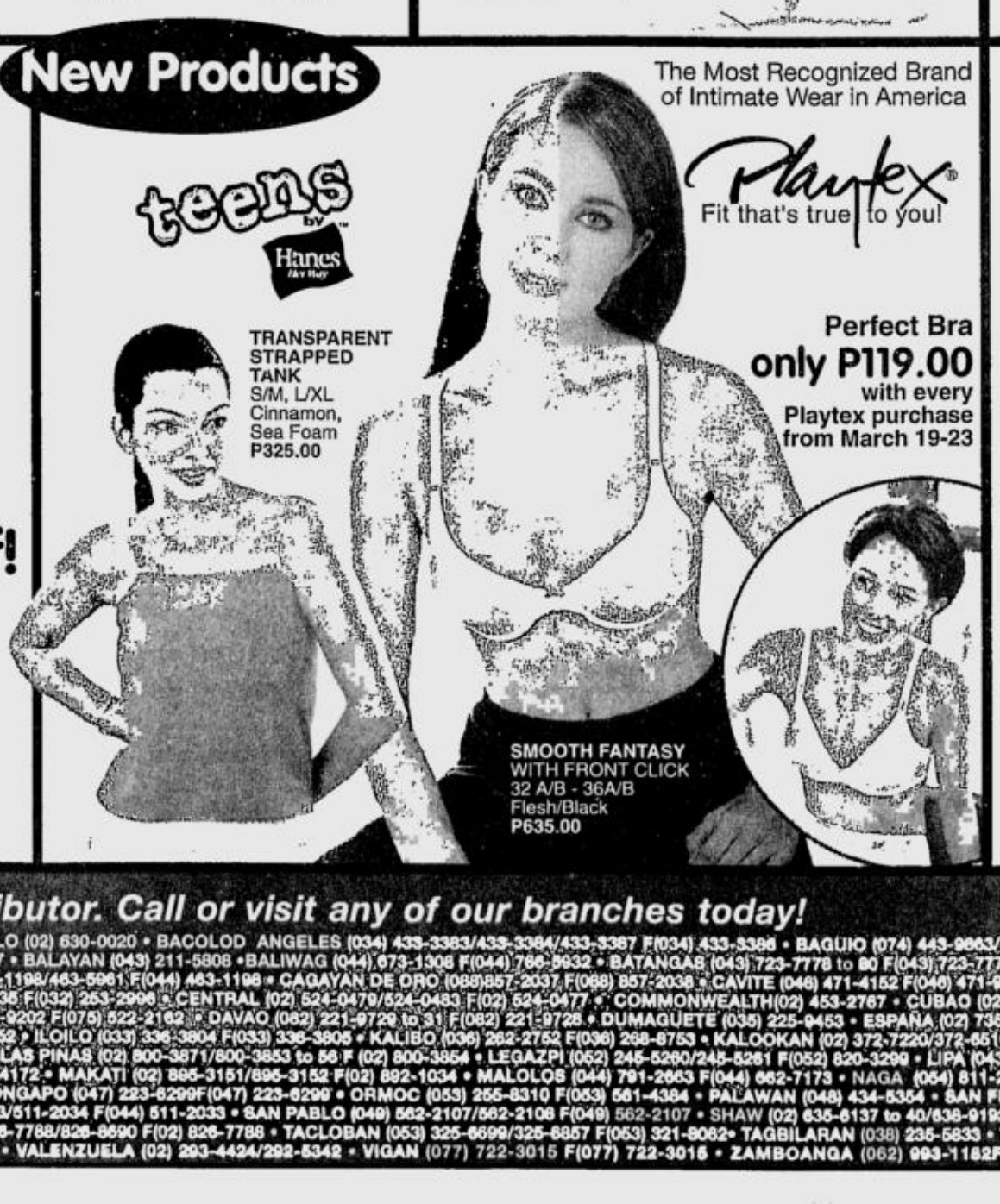

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SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 2002

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Al-Qaida fighters trapped, says US

GARDEZ/BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan—The US military said bad weather and American-led forces had trapped al-Qaida fighters, involved in the biggest battle of the Afghan war, in caves on Saturday.

US military spokesperson Maj. Bryan Hilferty said fighting at the start of the second week of the battle in freezing mountains near the eastern city of Gardez had slackened off for both sides because of driving snow, rain and strong winds.

"The weather is extremely bad," Major Hilferty told a news conference at Bagram air base on the outskirts of Kabul which has become the US control point for "Operation Anaconda."

"They (al-Qaida) appear to be pretty much hunkered down (in caves)."

He said there were no US or coalition casualties in overnight fighting, which mainly involved search and destroy missions in the mountains of Paktia Province near the Pakistan border and about 150 km south of the capital.

Eight soldiers have been killed and about 50 have been wounded in the battle on mountains that soar 3,630 meters.

There had been no casualties among other nations involved that include Britain, France, Germany, Denmark, Norway and Australia, Major Hilferty said.

Seven Afghan troops supporting the American-led attacks have been killed and 40 wounded, while more than 600 al-Qaida have been killed, the US military has said.

Major Hilferty revealed for the first time that US forces had captured prisoners. They were being interrogated. "We do have detainees," he said.

The bad weather forced Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in Washington to back down from his forecast that the battle could end over the weekend. He said the fighting might now go on for another seven to 10 days.

"The intensity of the battle has calmed down," he told CNN. "We're still continuing to bomb and there is some ground fire coming out from the al-Qaida, but it's relatively modest at the moment." ***Reuters***

AFGHAN fighters loyal to interim Prime Minister Hamid Karzai sit atop a Soviet Union-era tank outside of Logar, midway between Kabul and Gardez March 8. A convoy of troops and armored vehicles made its way toward the area where the United States is leading an offensive against Taliban and al-Qaida fighters in the Shahi Kot mountains. REUTERS

War fends off state terror, says report

WASHINGTON—A new secret US intelligence report says the war in Afghanistan may help to reduce state-sponsored terrorism as countries think twice about triggering similar repercussions, according to US government sources.

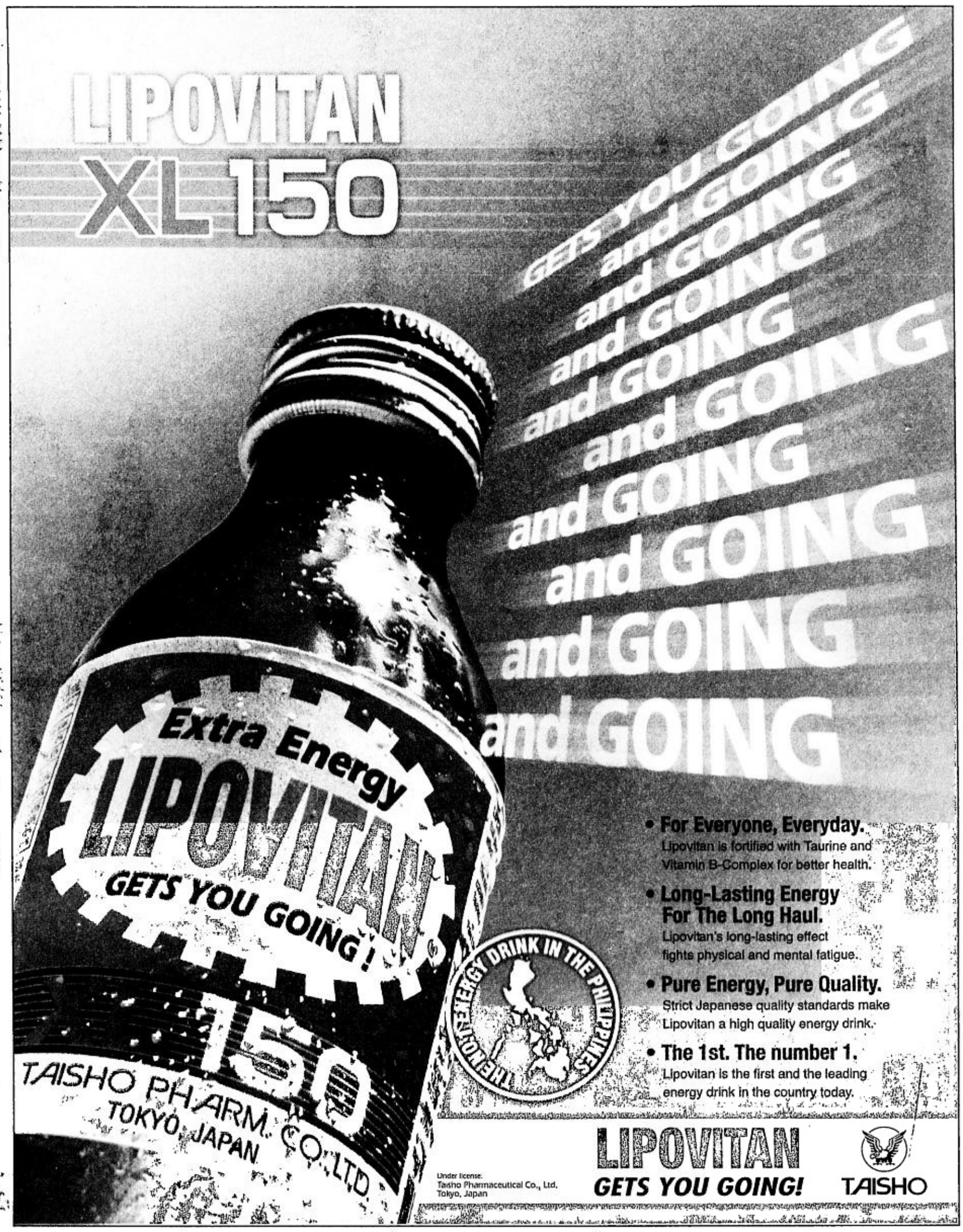
The 49-page National Intelligence Estimate dated February this year—even the title of which, "International Terrorist Threats to US Interests," is classified secret—was produced by the National Intelligence Council, which operates as a think-tank with experts from various agencies including the CIA and Defense Department.

The United States launched its war in Afghanistan on Oct. 7 to destroy Osama bin Laden and his al-Qaida network and their Taliban protectors. Bin Laden is blamed for masterminding the Sept. 11 attacks on America that killed about 3,000 people.

The intelligence report makes the case that "there has been a decline and that trend may continue because those who are considering state sponsorship have the Afghanistan model to consider," one source familiar with the report said.

The report, circulated to government officials last month, includes sections on trends in terrorism, sources of terrorism such as Islamic extremism and poverty, the Shi'ite divide and challenges of collecting intelligence, the sources said.

"If you go after the states, they're the ones who know these guys, they're the ones who know where they are, they know who their families are, they know where they're staying, their own internal security services probably know who they are, they're the only ones who can stop this," one source said. ***Reuters***



Milosevic: Bloodshed was struggle vs al-Qaida

THE HAGUE—Slobodan Milosevic waved an FBI document at his war crimes trial Friday to support his claim that the bloodshed in Kosovo was a struggle against terrorists backed by Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network.

The former Yugoslav president is accused of murders, deportations and other atrocities as part of a campaign to carve out a Greater Serbia after the breakup of the former Yugoslavia in 1991.

But as his trial wound up its fourth week, the Serbian nationalist turned to one of his chief defenses: that he was struggling against separatists and terrorists to hold a crumbling Yugoslav republic together.

"Neither the army nor the police have been implicated in war crimes," said Milosevic, who is acting in his own defense before a UN tribunal that he dismisses as illegal.

Cross-examining a Kosovo human rights activist, Milosevic suggested that al-Qaida and other Islamic mujahideen fighters were actively supporting the guerrillas of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) during the 1998-99 conflict.

He brandished what he called a statement by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation to the US Congress which said, "al-Qaida supports Muslim fighters in Bosnia, Chechnya and Kosovo."

The rights activist, Sabit Kadriu, dismissed the one-time Serbian strongman's suggestions of Kosovo as a hotbed of terrorism, saying: "It's a fiction of your imagination."

But when Kadriu reiterated his testimony that the Serbs went on a spree of "mutilating and killing civilians," Milosevic shot back: "We know whose specialty this is. It is the al-Qaida branch in Kosovo."

Milosevic has only recently played the anti-terrorism card in linking the Balkans conflicts of the 1990s to al-Qaida.

His brother Borislav Milosevic said last month that the KLA had direct ties to al-Qaida. He said Bin Laden traveled to Albania in 1998, but the Albanian authorities have denied that.

Milosevic is facing charges of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes in Croatia, Bosnia and Kosovo. If convicted he could be sentenced to life in prison.

The former Balkans strongman spent the day sparring with Kadriu, an Albanian Kosovar, in a cross-examination laced with political polemics that drew exasperated rebukes for both sides from impatient judges.

Clearly frustrated by the tribunal's efforts to rein in his questioning, Milosevic snapped back at Presiding Judge Richard May: "I'd like to ask you not to give me instructions, please."

Kadriu, a teacher and branch leader of the Council for the Defense of Human Rights and Freedoms, became progressively bolder, and was the first witness to look Milosevic squarely in the eye as they dueled. ***AFP***

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US reluctantly supports UN dialogue with Iraq

UNITED NATIONS—The United States reluctantly agreed Friday to further contacts between Iraq and the United Nations on the possible return of UN arms inspectors, but warned Baghdad not to drag out the talks.

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and Iraqi Foreign Minister Naji Sabri held three hours of talks here Thursday and agreed to meet again in mid-April.

Talks may resume on April 18-19, a Security Council member said after Annan briefed the council Friday. The alternative dates are April 28-29, UN officials said.

"The council generally encourages me to go ahead with the discussions with the Iraqis, on the understanding that we are talking of implementation of all Security Council resolutions," Annan told reporters.

The council imposed sanctions on Iraq after it invaded Kuwait in August 1990 and has said they will be removed only when Iraq proves that it has dismantled all its weapons of mass destruction.

In Washington, state department spokesperson Richard Boucher said the United States was not impressed with Thursday's meeting, Annan's first with officials from Baghdad for just over a year.

"We have not seen any indication at this point, even after this meeting, that Iraq is prepared to comply," Boucher said, adding that the Iraqis "raised issues aimed at preventing and delaying focus on their core obligations."

The last inspectors, accused by Iraq of spying for the United States, were withdrawn in December 1998 on the eve of a bombing campaign by US and British warplanes. Iraq has refused to let the UN resume work, although it has a new team, under a new chair with a different recruiting policy.

US President George W. Bush has branded Iraq part of an "axis of evil" and threatened it with unspecified action unless it allows the inspectors back.

But other council members, including Britain, the United States' closest ally, stressed the need to exhaust diplomatic efforts first.

"The diplomatic route is an extremely important one, and we want to see the prospects of full Iraqi compliance fully tested," Jeremy Greenstock, Britain's ambassador to the UN, told reporters. ***AFP***

Woman turns Brazil politics on its head

By Mary Milliken

SAO PAULO, Brazil—As Brazil celebrated International Women's Day on Friday, one woman in particular was capturing the nation's attention: Roseana Sarney, the country's first female presidential candidate, who has thrown the political world on its head seven months before elections.

Sarney on Thursday convinced her Liberal Front Party, or PFL, to quit the 7-year-old governing alliance of President Fernando Henrique Cardoso in protest against a fraud probe into a company owned by Sarney and her husband.

Tied for first in the opinion polls, the 47-year-old governor from the poor state of Maranhao commanded a surprising amount of respect from her conservative party, which might have ended up backing the candidate from Cardoso's camp. "Roseana Sarney won an important battle in her party by prompting the biggest political upheaval in recent times," said daily Folha de S. Paulo in its lead editorial Friday.

The news was big and hard to digest. The media, analysts, Wall Street investors and ordinary Brazilians were all at pains to understand what Sarney's bold bet meant for the elections.

"Everything is in the air," said Ricardo Guedes, director of pollsters Instituto Sensus, who forecast a topsy-turvy four months until party conventions conclude at the end of June.

The most coveted indicator this month will be how the daughter of former President Jose Sarney fares in the polls.

Plotting against women?

On the wings of a well-orchestrated media blitz, the charismatic woman with the Cheshire cat smile has soared to a 25-percent share of the vote in the polls, putting her on par with veteran leftist leader Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva.

The candidate from Cardoso's Social Democratic Party, or PSDB, former Health Minister Jose Serra, is lagging at around 10 percent of the vote. PFL leaders suggested the gap between Sarney and Serra prompted people in the government to push for the weekend raid by police on Sarney's company.

Guedes said he believes Sarney will lose ground among more educated voters because of the prickly probe, which is looking for links to funds missing from a development agency.

"But there are people who will vote for Roseana because they think there was a political plot carried out by the federal government," Guedes said.

Wall Street, meanwhile, appears to be more worried about the prospects of Lula coming to power if Sarney and Serra both run and split the center vote. Lula unsettles investors mostly for his stance in the past in favor of debt renegotiations.

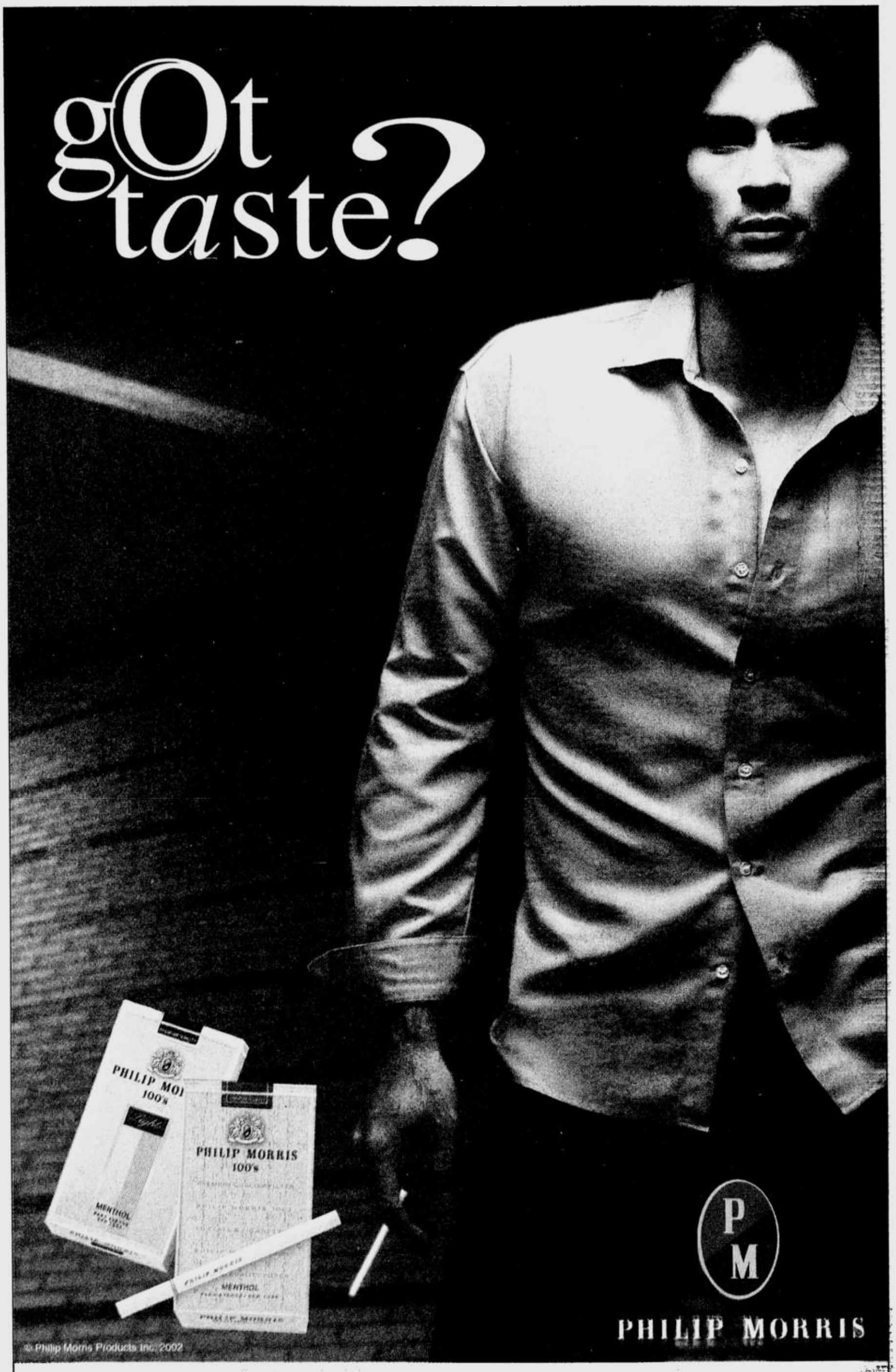
But foreigners may be less spooked by the turn of events than local investors.

"Brazilians have had a very negative interpretation of events," said Walter Molano of US-based BCP Securities, who is in Brazil this week.

Although Cardoso himself may be worried, he kept his composure and simply said he was "disappointed." On Friday, he invited female artists and women in his administration to lunch to commemorate Women's Day.

Meanwhile, at her party's celebration down the road in Brasilia, Sarney threw new darts at the male political establishment after claiming earlier in the week that the raid was "discrimination" against her for being a woman.

"There is a group out there that does not want women to get ahead," Sarney told the crowd, made up mostly of party bosses and well-groomed women carrying flowers for their candidate. ***Reuters***



Sharon willing to negotiate 'under fire'

JERUSALEM—Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said for the first time that ceasefire talks with the Palestinians would have to take place "under fire," as his conflict with the Palestinians marked its deadliest day since 1987.

Sharon's U-turn came after Israel sent its tanks and helicopters into the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, resulting in heavy clashes with gunmen and scenes of carnage that left 40 dead, and ahead of new missions to the region by a US Middle East peace envoy and Vice President Dick Cheney.

The escalation means that the current intifada looks set to be much bloodier than the first uprising against Israeli occupation that erupted on Dec. 9, 1987 and lasted for 70 months, killing around 1,250 Palestinians.

The death toll for the latest 17-month-old intifada, against Israeli occupation now stands at 1,443, including 1,102 Palestinians and 318 Israelis.

The bloodshed prompted Sharon to back down on a demand for seven days of absolute calm before ceasefire talks with Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, who remains surrounded by tanks in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

It also comes ahead of a new visit to the region next week by US peace envoy Anthony Zinni and heavy criticism from Washington that the policies of "both sides" were responsible for bringing the region closer to war.

"I thought we could reach a period of respite before a ceasefire," Sharon told Israeli television. "But this is a war situation we are experiencing."

"The negotiations for a ceasefire will take place under fire," the premier was quoted as saying. Sharon had not budged since his election more than a year ago in his insistence on the period of calm before talks.

However, Arafat's top aide, Nabil Adu Rudeina, dismissed the surprise declaration from Sharon as having "no value" and said the Israelis would have to stop their raids into Palestinian lands.

"Sharon must realize that he cannot obtain an end to the violence with a military solution. His declaration on negotiations of a truce 'under fire' has no value, he must stop his massacres and aggression against the Palestinian people," he said in Gaza City.

Abu Rudeina earlier said that Arafat had called for immediate US intervention to "stop the massacres" taking place in the territories, in a phone conversation with US Secretary of State Colin Powell.

However, in Washington, US state department spokesperson Richard Boucher issued a stinging critique that, "Right now, both sides should think through the consequences of the policies they're following."

"Both parties need to take a hard look at what they're doing now and take the necessary steps so that they can implement" existing plans to forge a ceasefire and bring about a resumption of a political dialogue, he said.

Boucher said Arafat bore a special responsibility and had to take further steps to curtail anti-Israel attacks, but made clear that Sharon also had to act as well to restrain military responses.

Under fire for not doing enough to forge Middle East peace, US President George W. Bush ordered Zinni back to the region next week and said Cheney would also seek to quell violence there during an upcoming visit, although Cheney later played down expectations.

The unprecedented outburst of violence came hot on the heels of an attack by the Islamic militant group Hamas on the Gaza Strip Jewish settlement of Atzmona, which a Palestinian gunman infiltrated overnight, killing five Israelis before being shot dead himself.

Israeli armored cars, tanks and bulldozers then stormed the villages of Khuzaa and Abassan, near the city of Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip. Those operations left 16 Palestinians dead and about 10 captured before the Israeli forces pulled out shortly after dawn. *AFP*

THE MOTHER of Hamas gunman Mohammed Farahat, 19-year-old who penetrated the Jewish settlement of Atsmona, carries a gun as she looks at his body during her son's funeral in Gaza March 8. The violence, in which five Israelis at the settlement and 21 Palestinians were killed, added urgency to a new US peace drive. REUTERS

Palestinian killed Jews out of rage

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip—From his backyard, the young Palestinian grew up watching Israeli soldiers move in and out of Gaza. He threw rocks at them as a boy. When he was 10, his rage overflowed at the death of a friend, and then came an unbearable yearning for revenge.

It finally happened Thursday, when 19-year-old Mohammed Farahat carefully clipped a hole through a fence and sneaked into a Jewish settlement in the Gaza Strip, where he shot and killed four Jewish students as they prayed and incinerated another in his bed by tossing a hand grenade.

Shot dead by soldiers while trying to make his escape, the devout Muslim achieved his other dream—friends and family now revere his memory and consider him a holy martyr.

The thin, tall Farahat grew up in an old neighborhood of downtown Gaza City, from where he could see the Nahal Oz crossing point into Israel. Daily he watched the Israeli soldiers there, angered to see them moving freely past his neighborhood. A boyhood friend said Farahat grew angry and troubled and began searching for a mission, for meaning.

"Day by day the question mark in our minds became bigger," said the friend Maamoun Abu Kadum. Soon, the two of them, then just boys joined the first Palestinian uprising, known in Arabic as the intifada—street battles that lasted six years, ending in 1993. *AP*

India scorns Pakistan invitation for dialogue

NEW DELHI—India's powerful interior minister Saturday turned down an invitation to Pakistan for peace talks, saying dialogue was meaningless if Pakistan did not end its backing of terrorism across the Kashmir border.

"I am grateful to them for the invitation. The experience in the past few years has shown that there is no need for talks," Lal Krishna Advani was quoted as saying by the Press Trust of India.

On Friday, Pakistan's Interior Minister Moinuddin Haider invited India's hardline interior minister to visit Islamabad in an attempt to defuse tensions between the South Asian nuclear rivals.

Advani is considered the second most powerful man in India's ruling coalition after Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. He is in charge of India's internal security and the affairs of Kashmir, the disputed region that has been the cause of two wars between India and Pakistan since their independence from Britain in 1947.

Renewed tensions over Kashmir have been escalating for weeks. Since a Dec. 13 suicide attack on India's Parliament that New Delhi blamed on Pakistan's spy agency and two militant groups based there, the two traditional rivals have massed hundreds of thousands of battle-ready troops across their shared border.

"They have to first prove at the ground level that they want to end terrorism," Advani said in an address to a paramilitary parade at Ghaziabad, a town bordering New Delhi.

India says Islamabad arms, trains and funds separatist Islamic militants who have carried out attacks on army targets in Kashmir in which thousands of civilians have also been killed since 1989.

Pakistan says it only offers political and diplomatic support. Pakistan's President Gen. Pervez Musharraf has repeatedly said he is ready to hold peace talks with India "anywhere, anytime," and accuses India of not doing enough to pursue peace. In December, he announced he was launching a crackdown on Islamic hardliners and would not accept terrorism in the name of Kashmir.

India says Pakistan must do more than just promise peace, and that Musharraf must match words with action.

Military officials in Kashmir say that militant attacks and the infiltration of guerrillas from Pakistan-held territory to Indian-controlled Kashmir continues as before, and that there has been no impact on the ground to Musharraf's declaration. *AP*

Texas woman in windshield slay put under house arrest

FORT WORTH, Texas—A Texas nurse's aide—accused of letting a man bleed to death trapped for two days in her car's windshield after she hit him—was put under house arrest due to a state judge raising her bond to $250,000 on Friday.

MALLARD

Chante Mallard, 25, was ordered to wear an electronic monitor, avoid drinking or driving and undergo counseling after prosecutors argued the community was outraged by her previous release on a $10,000 bond.

Mallard is charged with murder for allegedly letting Gregory Glen Biggs bleed to death in her garage wedged in her windshield after she hit him on a Fort Worth highway last October. The charge carries a penalty between five years and life.

"It's no secret that the community is outraged by this offense," Tarrant County assistant district attorney Richard Alpert told the court.

Biggs, 37, was hurled headfirst through the windshield by the impact of the late night accident, his broken legs lying across the car's hood.

Instead of seeking help that police say could have saved Biggs' life, Mallard told investigators she panicked and drove to her nearby home, where she closed the garage door with Biggs still in the windshield.

Over the next two days, investigators say, Mallard repeatedly went into the garage but never freed Biggs or called for help.

Biggs, who lived in a city homeless shelter, died of blood loss and shock, according to the coroner's report. He probably would have survived with medical attention, police said. ***Reuters***

Catholic bishop in sex mess resigns

WEST PALM BEACH, Florida—The Roman Catholic Bishop of West Palm Beach resigned Friday, admitting that he had sexually abused a young seminary student 25 years ago.

Bishop Anthony J. O'Connell told a news conference here: "My heart bleeds for Chris Dixon. I was a wrong as can be."

His resignation came just hours after the 10 Roman Catholic bishops in the state of Florida, including O'Connell, issued a statement condemning sexual abuse by clergy members.

O'Connell's resignation was the latest in a series of disclosures that have rocked the US Roman Catholic community in the aftermath of a sexual abuse scandal in Boston. The Catholic Diocese there has relieved 10 priests of their duties and handed the names of 80 others to state prosecutors.

The charges against O'Connell were first aired earlier this week in St. Louis, Missouri, by Christopher Dixon, a former priest who studied under O'Connell at a Missouri seminary in the late 1970s.

Dixon, now 40, said he had gone to O'Connell for counseling and ended up being fondled by him.

O'Connell came to Palm Beach in 1999, to replace Bishop J. Keith Symons, the first US bishop to resign over charges of sexual abuse of young boys.

Dixon's own career in the priesthood was cut short in 1995 by clinical depression. In 1996, he accused two Missouri priests of abusing him as a youth. ***AFP***

Asylum seekers disrupt Chunnel

LONDON—Channel Tunnel rail freight services between England and France have been suspended for the next three days while French rail operator SNCF tries to clear a 17-train backlog caused by break-ins by asylum seekers, UK railfreight firm EWS said late on Friday.

The simmering problem came to a head after more than 200 asylum seekers broke into the Tunnel's Calais rail depot on Thursday night, forcing the cancellation of all overnight services, EWS said.

Launching a scathing attack against SNCF and the French authorities for failing to prevent dozens of asylum seekers trying to stowaway on trains heading to Britain, EWS said more police had to be drafted in.

"The French should simply provide adequate security to run services 24-hours a day. We were told in November there weren't enough police at the end of last year because of the introduction of the Euro, but that is all done and dusted now," a spokesperson said. ***Reuters***

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GLS M/T	680,000	340,000	30,060	20,729	16,482	11,758	9,420	8,398
GLS A/T	710,000	355,000	31,386	21,643	17,209	12,277	9,836	8,768
MX	790,000	395,000	34,923	24,082	19,148	13,660	10,944	9,756

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Mindanao hit by aftershock; lake watched

A LIGHT aftershock struck Mindanao on Saturday where an earlier powerful earthquake killed 10 people, collapsed bridges and forced the evacuation of 28,000 people.

The Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said the magnitude 3.8 aftershock at 2:27 a.m. was centered 15 kilometers under the sea, about 235 km southwest of General Santos City, which is about 1,000 km south of Manila.

The Phivolcs said the aftershock apparently caused no damage.

The epicenter was the same spot as the magnitude 6.8 quake that hit the area before dawn Wednesday when falling debris, collapsing walls and mudslides also injured 17 people.

The deaths included one electrocution besides the several people crushed by debris or killed by mudslides triggered by the shaking.

Civil defense officials said the quake destroyed 29 buildings, including an elementary school, a mosque and two churches, in three provinces in the extreme south and damaged 47 more buildings.

It also sparked a local power outage, destroyed or damaged bridges and triggered landslides that blocked a local road.

The tremor was caused by the movement of the Cotabato Trench, where an earthquake created a tsunami, or a massive wave, that killed more than 5,000 people in the Moro Gulf region northwest of General Santos in August 1976.

Evacuees return

On Friday, evacuations in at least three towns in South Cotabato have stopped after the water level of Lake Maughan returned to normal.

But disaster officials in the province were still closely monitoring the lake after another landslide occurred near the lake's mouth on Friday morning.

Arnel Arsenia, assistant social welfare chief of South Cotabato, told the INQUIRER that they received the landslide report early Friday morning.

But Arsenia said they have not noticed any swelling in the Allah River, one of the lake's tributaries.

Arsenia reported that evacuations in the towns of Lake Sebu, T'boli and Surallah have stopped, but there were still about 1,000 evacuees in various centers in these towns.

He said 209 families with 999 dependents were still staying in the evacuation centers.

Most of the evacuees were residing along the banks of the Allah River. They evacuated after Lake Maughan overflowed on Wednesday after the earthquake.

In Surallah, 61 families with 200 dependents were staying in the evacuation centers, while in T'boli, 40 families with 254 dependents fled from their homes and sought temporary shelter in centers there.

The most number of evacuees came from Lake Sebu, with 108 families or 545 people.

On Thursday afternoon, disaster officials led by Senior Supt. Bartolome Baluyot, police chief for Central Mindanao, and South Cotabato Gov. Daisy Avance-Fuentes conducted aerial inspection and took aerial photographs of the portion of the lake affected by landslide.

Baluyot said that based on their latest information, the estimated damage caused by last Wednesday's earthquake in South Cotabato would reach P30 million.

Quake damage

Officials in the South Cotabato-Sarangani-General Santos (Socsargen) area placed the damage caused by last Wednesday's earthquake on properties, government infrastructure, commercial buildings and residential houses at P124 million.

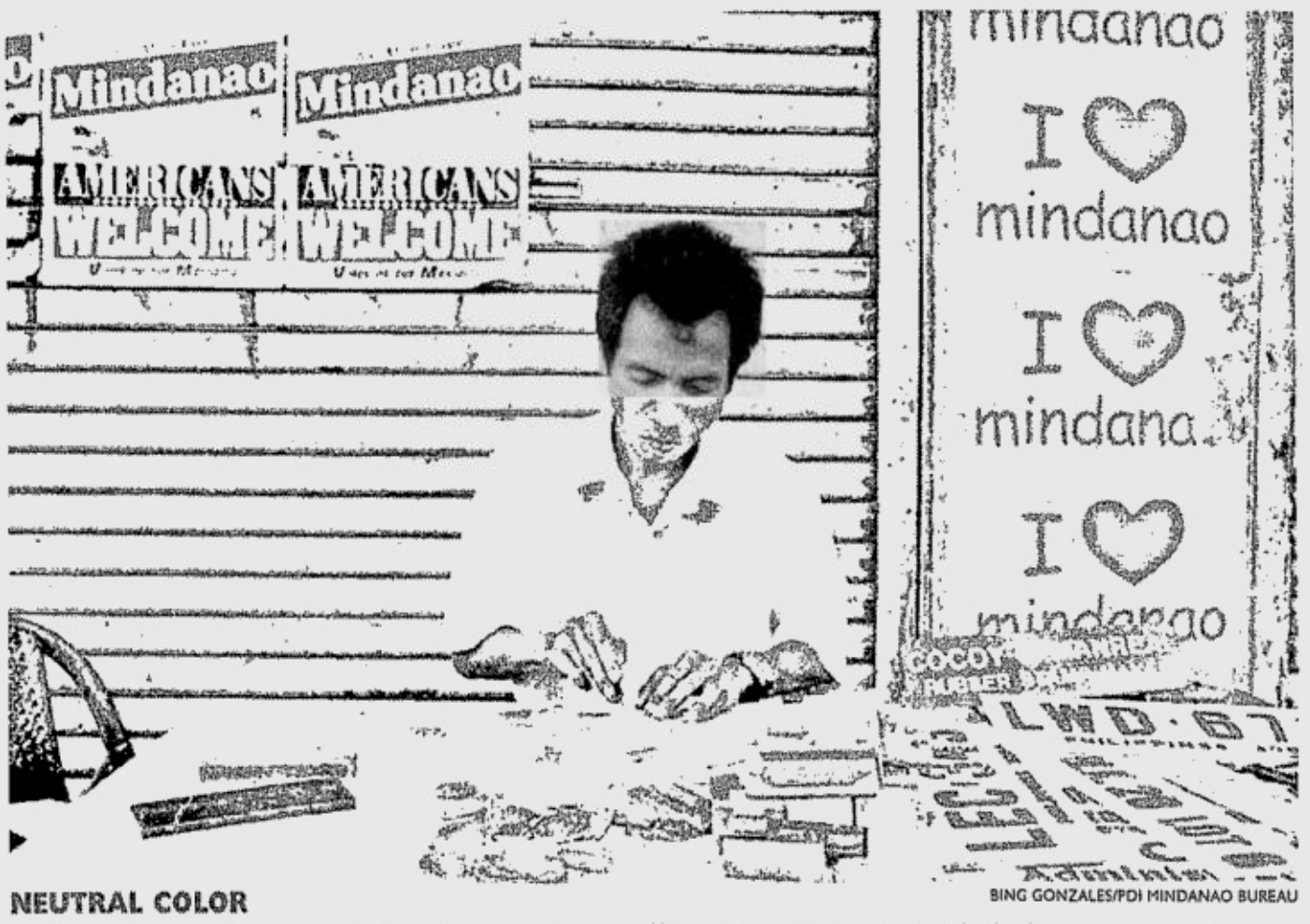
South Cotabato was considered the hardest hit with a total damage of about P100 million.

Sarangani had about P18 million in damage, while General Santos City had an estimated damage of P6 million.

The Philippine Volcanology and Seismology in General Santos City disclosed that they have recorded more than 70 aftershocks since the killer quake struck early morning Wednesday.

Virgilio Leyretana, an aide of presidential assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza on Friday said the local government units affected by the jolt should take the lead in the rehabilitation efforts by using their calamity funds, as the national government is facing "budgetary constraints."

Reports from AP and Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau



BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

NEUTRAL COLOR
A rubber stamp maker appears to be very busy and unmindful of the controversy over the Balikatan war games in Basilan. Behind him are posters from opposing camps.

House probe of NTC suspension of 'Bombo Radyo stations backed

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau
and Ma. Kristina E. Cassion
PDI Mindanao Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The city council has backed the Bombo Radyo Philippines network whose 11 stations were ordered suspended by the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC).

In a resolution, the council endorsed House Resolution 447 calling for an investigation into the NTC order. Both resolutions said the order infringes on freedom of expression and violates due process because it was issued without any hearings conducted.

"These radio stations do not only provide timely and relevant information to the public but also provide needed public service, thus their closure is imbued with public interest," the council resolution said.

Councilors Armand Parcon and Joshua Alim, former employees of Bombo Radyo Philippines, and Erlinda Liberiaga authored the city resolution.

Parcon said a copy of the resolution would be sent to the House of Representatives and the Senate, where Sen. Rodolfo Biazon is calling on similar inquiries.

The NTC ordered the suspension of 11 stations under the Newsounds Broadcasting Network (NBN) for changing its name from Northern Broadcasting Co. (NBC) to NBN.

In its order, the NTC also told NBN to show cause within 10 days why its 11 stations should not be closed down and their assigned radio frequencies be recalled.

These stations are Star FM-Marbel, Tacloban, Iligan, Tuguegarao and Bombo Stations in Cagayan de Oro, Naga, Tacloban, Daet, La Union, Laoag, and Cauayan, Isabela.

The stations, however, continued operating. On March 1, the NTC lifted its suspension order pending the hearing on the merits of the case set for Tuesday.

The NBN is one of the three networks under Bombo Radyo Philippines. The two others are the Consolidated Broadcasting System and the People's Broadcasting System.

The network has 43 AM and FM stations nationwide. Iloilo's dyFM Bombo Radyo is the network's flagship station.

Cauayan, Butuan

Two Bombo Radyo stations got in trouble recently. On Feb. 12, armed men entered the station's facility in Cauayan, Isabela, cut off its power supply and cannibalized the transmitter.

They alleged that the station has no business permit and violated the local zoning regulation.

Local Government Secretary Jose Lina wrote Cauayan Mayor Cesar Dy on Feb. 26, chiding him for his refusal to grant a mayor's permit to Bombo when the station had already complied with all requirements.

In Butuan, the city council passed a resolution supporting Mayor Daisy Plaza's order to close down Bombo Radyo Butuan because it lacked a temporary use permit and environmental clearance certificate.

The regional trial court has issued a temporary restraining order against the city government, but this did not stop *lumad* supporters of Plaza, the wife of one of their *datus*, from staging protests in front of the station.

A *lumad* group vowed to abduct radio personnel to force the station manager to step down, while another threatened to kill him.

Police told Bombo employees to take precautionary measures after Datu Sumidlak Constancio Dagiom, chair of the Kahugpongan sa mga Tribong Lumad sa Caraga, issued the threat during a press conference.

The tribal leader figured in at least two kidnapping incidents in the past.

Hydro plant fuels hope of Cotabato folk

ALAMADA, Cotabato—Residents in this remote town are pushing for the construction of a P600-million mini-hydroelectric plant in preparation for the privatization of the National Power Corp.

Jireh Manna Hydropower Philippines Inc. (JMDHI) will pour in P600 million to P700 million in capital for the construction of the Alamada hydropower project to light up a third of the province.

Alamada Mayor Ernesto Concepcion said the project would help a lot in developing the area. The project site itself, which is in Barangay Dado, has no electricity.

Concepcion said the project was conceptualized in 1997, but he doubted if it would push through.

"But I saw the benefits in the project, so I am endorsing it. In the first place, there is no problem on peace and order in this area," Concepcion said.

Dado Barangay Chair Ricky Natial said the villagers, who have never experienced having a 24-hour electricity, are very hopeful that the project will push through.

Natial said the project would initially benefit Barangays Upper Dado, Lower Dado, Pigcawaran and Raradangan. In Dado alone, about 13,000 people or 2,060 households will directly benefit.

Natial said he would also ask the investor to give priority to barangay residents for jobs. The project can employ about 1,000 workers during the construction stage.

The proposed project is a 10-megawatt mini hydropower plant, which can serve a third of Cotabato's demand of 25 megawatts. ***Ayan Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

TOWN FESTIVAL STAR

Oldest Bicolano becomes celebrity

By Job Belen
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—Jose Shull, the oldest Bicolano who was featured in the Feb. 4 issue of the INQUIRER, has become an instant celebrity as many people, including the Department of Tourism officials, have been coming to his place to interview him.

In fact, he will be presented in the Tabak Festival street parade on March 22.

The city tourism council will provide his float and attire during the affair.

On March 6, Shull received, through the INQUIRER, a check amounting to P10,114 from a certain Stephen Watson of Baguio City.

The 5'2" American-Filipino mestizo, who will turn 114 on May 25, said the donation was a big help, especially in putting up important facilities in his small house.

"I'm going to use the money for electrical installation and the construction of a comfort room in my house," he said.

Shull said he needed to have his own toilet room so that he will no longer use his neighbor's. "I am ashamed of my neighbors because many times I failed to reach the toilet for my body waste discharge," he said.

Although he failed to meet his donor, he wants to thank him very much.

"I wish God would bless him (Watson) all the time. God was the one who told him to give something for me. I pray for his success," the centenarian said.

Accompanied to the office of the INQUIRER Southern Luzon Bureau here by Tabaco City Councilor Alfredo Adalla, one of the three people who have given him refuge, Shull said that although he has no more relatives, he is lucky because there are people who want to help him.

"My prayers have been heard through the American donor," he said.

Shull said that if there are donations for him, he will keep it for use in case he gets ill.

"If I will still have money, I'd rather prepare it for my hospitalization since I'm already old. It is better for one like me to have money, now that I have no (more) relatives," he said.

OLDEST Bicolano Jose Shull, 114, receives a P10,114 check donated by American Stephen Watson from Job Belen, correspondent of the INQUIRER's Southern Luzon Bureau, in the presence of Tabaco City Councilor Alfredo Adalla, also a benefactor of Shull. TONY MACASINAG/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Antique folk commemorate founding day

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

SAN JOSE, Antique—The province will hold today its first-ever commemoration of its foundation day in 85 years.

Government employees, non-government groups and residents will join officials led by Rep. Exequiel Javier and Gov. Salvacion Zaldivar-Perez in the day-long celebration.

Senate President Franklin Drilon will be the guest speaker in the morning program at the Evelio B. Javier Freedom Park.

The foundation date was set and declared a non-working day under Provincial Ordinance 2001-010, which was approved by the provincial board in a special session on Nov. 14, 2001. Board Member Vincent Piccio III, author of the ordinance and chair of the Antique Historical Council, said March 10 signified the birth of the province.

It was on March 10, 1917 when the Philippine Legislature created Antique province under Act No. 2711 or the Administrative Code of the Philippines of 1917 during the administration of Governor-General Francis Burton Harrison.

Today's commemoration rites included the blessing of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan (SP) Hall, the unveiling of the SP seal and oathtaking of officers of the Antique Historical Council.

Antique is one of four provinces of Panay Island, with a population of 431,713 as of 1995 and a land area of 2,517 square kilometers. It comprises 18 municipalities.

Despite its rich resources, it is considered one of the poorest provinces in the country.

Water crisis in Baguio to worsen this summer

BAGUIO CITY—Because of lack of rains since December, the city's water reserve has gone down by 40 percent, prompting the Baguio Water District (BWD) to resort to drastic measures like water rationing.

The city's water requirement is 94,000 cubic meters, but the BWD can only provide 32,000 cu.m. or a third of the demand, said Albert Arenas, BWD assistant general manager.

Visitors got an idea of the water crisis during last month's Panagbenga Festival when about 250,000 people came. The demand for water went up to about 300,000 cu.m. a day.

To conserve water, the BWD has decided to ration water, Arenas said. "Those who have water everyday will now have it three times a week while those who have it three times a week will have it twice a week," he said.

Some areas, particularly in the western part, hardly receive water once a week.

"It would have been ideal if our watersheds are well maintained. But what happens is that they are being burned right now," Arenas said.

The Baguio fire department reported that 10 hectares of forestland in the city were recently razed by fire.

At the onset of the dry season, forest fires have become a familiar sight in the Cordillera.

Last week, fires leveled at least 50 hectares of the Gadagad forest between Sapid and Cabiten villages in Mankayan, Benguet.

Flor Fajilan, Lepanto Mines media representative, said the fires raged for at least three days and slowly encroached into three mountains near the mines. The mountains are part of the town's watershed, he said.

Fajilan said they dug trenches as firebreaks. "But we have reason to believe that the fires were intentional. As soon as the firebreaks stopped the blaze, the next day a fire would start over the breaks," Fajilan said.

He said upland farmers use the town's mountains for their *kaingin* (slash and burn farming).

Arenas said the rapid evaporation of water in the hot months has hastened the drying up of the city reservoir.

Saying that the water source is mostly groundwater, he also lamented the rise in the number of deep wells in the city.

Last year, there were more than 598 private deep wells in the city, while the BWD had only 50 deep wells.

"It's like there are 600 straws sipping into the water. How can you compete with that?" he said.

To augment the depleting water sources, the BWD will implement a new water project system by revising the terms of reference (TOR) of the decade-old bulk water supply program.

Arenas said the TOR was being finalized to set the "ideal, reasonable and fair ceiling price to attract private proponents."

In 1994 when the project started, the ceiling price was P11 per cu.m. "But that was when the exchange rate was only P26 to $1. Now it's P52 to $1 so the ceiling price should also increase," Arenas said.

To prepare for the bulk water supply program, the BWD will put up water pipelines worth P730 million in the city.

"These are really huge pipes that will be placed on sidewalks and (road) gutters to avoid destruction of the present road system," he said. ***Frank Cimatu and Jovelyn Reyes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers. source: **pagasa**

Metro Manila	Partly cloudy to cloudy	Hi32° Lo20°
Baguio	Partly cloudy to cloudy	Hi 23° Lo 11°
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with rains	Hi 26° Lo 18°
Laoag	Cloudy with rains	Hi 32° Lo 19°
Clark Zone	Partly cloudy to cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 18°
Tagaytay	Partly cloudy to cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 18°
Legazpi	Cloudy with rains	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Calapan	Partly cloudy to cloudy	Hi 31° Lo 20°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with rains	Hi 31° Lo 23°
Roxas	Cloudy with rains	Hi 30° Lo 25°
Cebu	Cloudy with rains	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Tacloban	Cloudy with rains	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with rains	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with rains	Hi 33° Lo 23°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with rains	Hi 29° Lo 22°
Davao	Cloudy with rains	Hi 30° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Armin P. Adina, PDI Research/03/9/02

ROUNDUP

Red tide clarification

MATI, Davao Oriental—Shellfish traders in the protected Pujada Bay have urged the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources to clarify its report on red tide contamination here. Sales of shellfish from the bay have significantly dropped because of the report, they said. Felipe Montera of the BFAR said the report showed that it was the Balite Bay that was hit by red tide, not Pujada Bay. He said his office was strictly enforcing the ban on shellfish gathering in Balite after reports showed that at least four people have died after eating contaminated shellfish.

Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Cyber forum in Dagupan

A CYBER forum, the first in Northern Luzon, will be held at the People's Astrodome in Dagupan City with information technology executive Jose Perez de Venecia III delivering the keynote address on its opening day on March 12. De Venecia, son of Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., joins former President Fidel Ramos and Mayor Benjamin Lim in the opening rites of the five-day Grand Cyber Forum 2002, according to a news release. President Macapagal-Arroyo will address the forum through the webcast, organizers said.

Schools get computers

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry turned over P12.6 million worth of free computer laboratory packages to 21 public high schools in Laguna, according to a DTI press release. Each school received 20 computer units with two printers, an external modem and an external CD-ROM. The teachers were trained on basic hardware operation, troubleshooting and maintenance. Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II said during the turnover rites recently at the Biñan National High School that the "project aims to give students an equal chance to join the ranks of IT professionals and a crack at better paying jobs in the future."

Human rights violations

LUCENA CITY—The Task Force Tanggol-Karapatan, an alliance of cause-oriented groups in Southern Tagalog, accused the military of committing at least 42 cases of human rights violations last year. Nancy Rada, Karapatan spokesperson, said the incidents involved alleged killing of civilians and warrantless arrests, among other abuses. Maj. Gerard Velez, the military's Southern Luzon Command spokesperson, denied the reports, saying the issues raised by the militant groups were "old and rehashed."

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Cebu mayor collapses

CEBU CITY—Mayor Tomas Osmeña was rushed to the hospital after he collapsed while attending a wedding at the Metropolitan Cathedral at about 3 p.m. yesterday. Nagiel Bañacia, city public information officer, said the mayor suffered from hypertension after his blood pressure suddenly increased to 240 over 120. "No, he did not suffer a heart attack or a stroke. The doctor said it was caused by hypertension mainly due to fatigue. He is now conscious and coherent," he said. Bañacia said the doctor advised the mayor to rest for five days. ***Connie Fernandez, PDI Visayas Bureau***

Bolinao fish pen operators ignore advice on recovery

BOLINAO, Pangasinan—Ignoring the advice of experts to allow municipal waters to recover from pollution, aquaculture operators here have re-stocked some of their fish pens and cages to recoup their losses.

"Almost all of the operators have unpaid loans for stocks and feeds so they want to earn by re-stocking," Elias Quisay, president of the Bolinao Fishermen Association, said.

Quisay, who claimed to have lost P15 million from the fish kill that struck Bolinao last month, said the municipal government issued a resolution on the moratorium of fishery operations without a public hearing.

He said environmental-activist Margaret Celeste was barking up the wrong tree when she accused the operators of damaging the environment.

In her letter to the association, Celeste said the BFA members would be held accountable to the residents and to the law if the fishery industry was not properly regulated and a fish kill occurred again.

"Do not provoke us to rally against you," Celeste said in her letter.

Quisay, however, said the operators have learned their lessons, claiming they care for the municipal waters "because it was us operators who will be most affected when something goes wrong with the environment."

"More than her (Celeste), we have more interest at stake because our livelihood is in the sea. She has no interest because she has no fishing cage," he said.

Quisay said Celeste must direct her criticisms at big capitalists who are not from Bolinao but own the big fish pens and cages in the town.

"They come and go. When they don't earn anymore, they move to other places but we stay here," he said. ***Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

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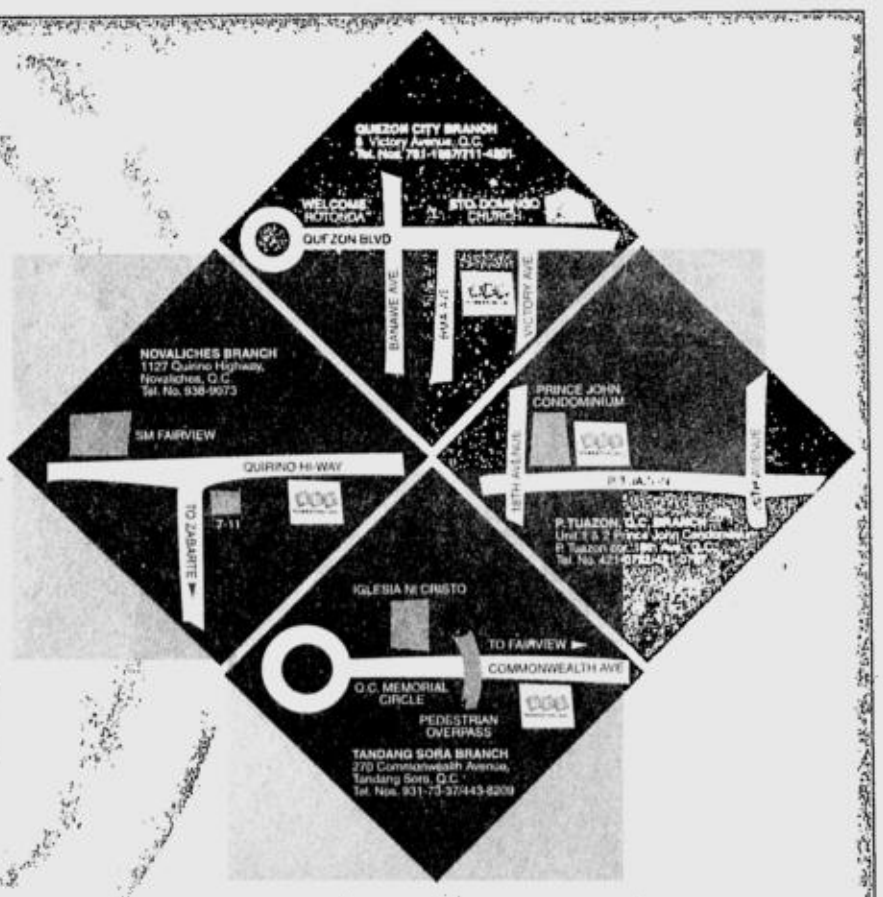

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INQUIRER Mindanao
Editor Jun Bandayrel • Bureau Chief Nico A. Alconaba

The ground shook, the lights went out

By Aquiles Z. Zonio
General Santos City

I WAS comfortably sitting on a long wooden bench, sipping a glass of milk in one of the coffee shops inside General Santos City's public market when I felt a slight shudder under my feet.

I was about to ignore what was happening when suddenly, the ground started shaking violently, sending market goers and vendors to panic.

Then the lights went out.

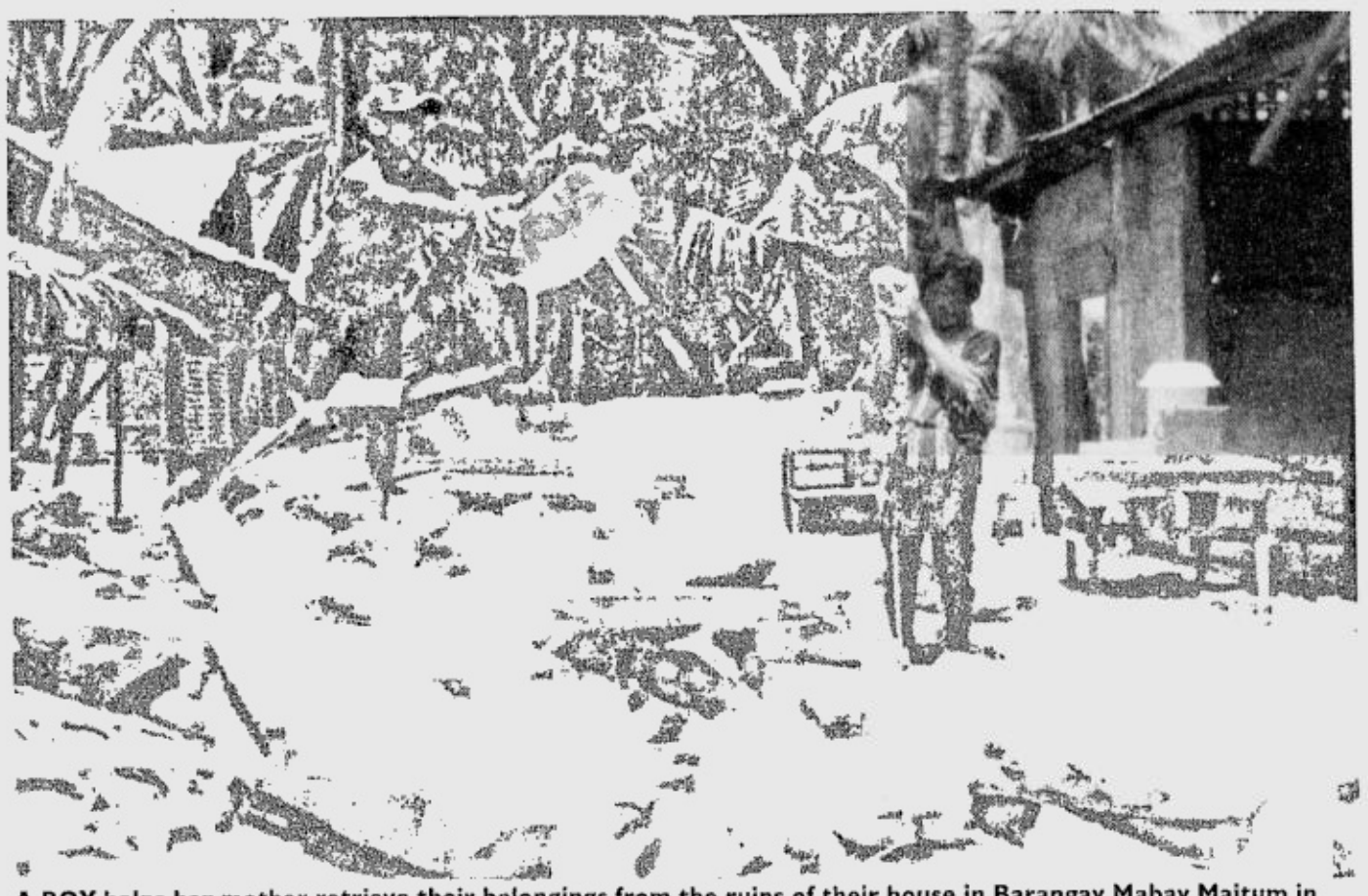
Utter darkness enveloped the entire area, less than 100 meters from the seashore. People started shrieking and wailing, trying to grope their way out of the dark nooks and crannies of the market building.

"Oh, my God! Help me!" and "Lord, forgive my sins!" were heard almost everywhere. I couldn't help but murmur a prayer while firmly clutching to one of the steel posts of the building, hoping that the swaying water reservoir and steel trusses cracking above would not collapse on me.

I felt as if we were trapped inside a deep, closed and airtight tunnel. Darkness exacerbated the fear and tension.

I tried to regain control over my feelings. I did not run as I knew that once I stumble and fall, stomping feet would kill, if not maim, me.

One vendor inched his way toward his stall to put out a fire caused by a spilled kerosene gas. What a brave man! He doesn't want the fire to spread as he knew it would cause a conflagration. He splashed gallons of water preventing another calamity.



A BOY helps her mother retrieve their belongings from the ruins of their house in Barangay Mabay Maitum in Kiamba, Sarangani, which collapsed during the earthquake. RYAN LIM

After more than 20 seconds or so, the tremor stopped.

I could see the mess all over. Everything inside the market building was in disarray. Shattered and broken glasses and bottles were scattered on the concrete floor.

Most of the people were speechless, faces pale and contorted, lips quivering and hands trembling.

Others vomited due to convulsing fear and tension.

I noticed that many suffered bruises. Others sprained their ankles during the stampede.

After sensing that everything seemed to have returned to normal, I proceeded home without buying anything my wife had told me to get. I was anxious about what happened to her and our 3-year-old kid.

How I wish I had wings so I can fly home immediately. There was no taxi or tricycle plying the street. About 30 minutes of waiting, a tricycle passed by and drove me home.

I was relieved upon seeing my little kid and wife lying in bed and waiting for my return.

Fear was etched on their faces. The emotional ordeal that my son had gone through was still visible. He was tightly clutching his mom, burying his face deep on her bosom.

Tidal waves

After about an hour, I went to the Lion's Beach, a public area near the market, to find out whether a tidal wave also occurred during the earthquake.

Jojo Pedrosa, a guard detailed at the Retirement and Separation Benefit System (RSBS), said his two colleagues jumped out of the tower house's window when they saw billowing tidal waves in the Sarangani Bay.

"We were not afraid of the quake. We were afraid of the giant waves," Pedrosa said.

He said they were just fortunate that the waves were headed toward the center of the bay, not toward the shoreline. "They smashed against each other," he said.

The RSBS tower house is situated along the shoreline. It was put up to serve as resting quarters for the guards tasked with preventing squatters from entering the RSBS' prime seaside property.

I learned that two out of the six motorized boats moored at the Lion's Beach were smashed into smithereens by the giant waves.

Pedrosa claimed that the water in the Sarangani Bay receded by about 15 meters from the coastline at the height of the quake.

'Lumads' regain Kaamulan Festival

By Grace Cantal-Albasin
Malaybalay City

THE SEVEN indigenous peoples in Bukidnon have gained back what really belonged to them—the Kaamulan Festival.

Gov. Jose Maria Zubiri Jr. ordered the revival of the true essence of the celebration by highlighting the presence of the *lumads*—Higaonon, Manobo, Talaandig, Umayamnon, Matigsalog, Bukidnon and Tigwahanon—in the festival.

CULTURE

In past celebrations, the local government units in Bukidnon competed with each other in depicting the various rituals of the *lumads*. The participants, however, had been students, government employees and some *lumads*, while hundreds of thousands of pesos had been spent for costumes and other preparations.

"Why do we have to highlight those who are not real IPs (indigenous peoples) but are depicting them, when we have these *lumads* who are pretty much alive to show those rituals?" Zubiri asked.

Rep. Jose Miguel Zubiri (second district) said the Kaamulan deserved to be known in the other parts of the country.

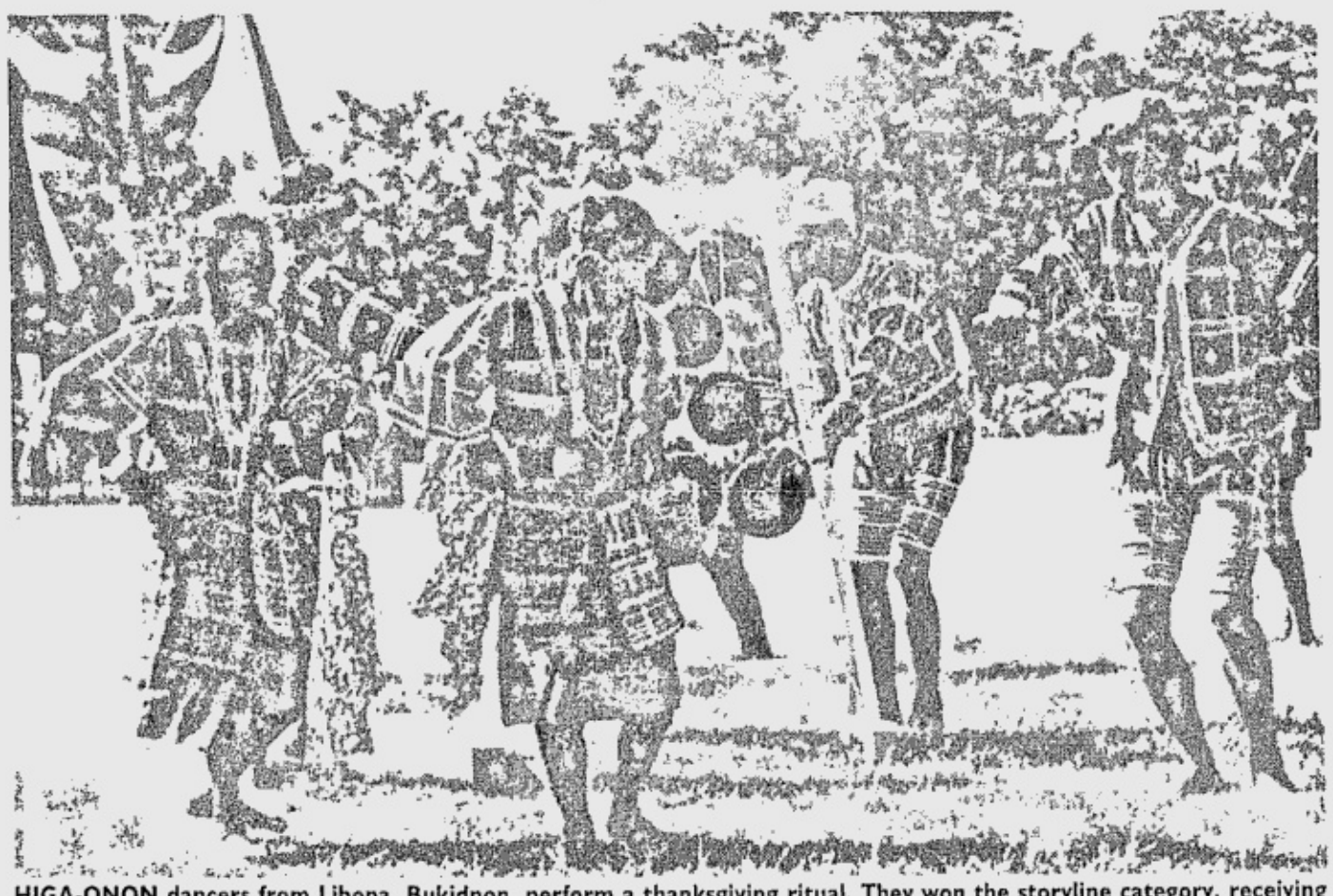
"The Manila people do not know what the festival is all about. It has to be known just like the other festivals, such as the Sinulog (Cebu) and Masskara (Bacolod City)," he said.

"The Kaamulan is even more special since the participants are residents here unlike others where the competitors come from the other places," he said.

The *lumads* in Bukidnon, Zubiri said, deserved to be honored for they have been steadfast in preserving their culture.

He also stressed the presence of foreign tourists, who arrived in the province just to witness the festival. "It goes to show that Bukidnon is peaceful and that these foreigners are assured of their safety," he said.

Renowned film director Marilou Diaz-Abaya said the show held on March 2 moved her. It was her first time to witness the celebration and see the *lumads* perform.



HIGA-ONON dancers from Libona, Bukidnon, perform a thanksgiving ritual. They won the storyline category, receiving P25,000 cash prize. GRACE ALBASIN

"It was moving, not only because of what I have seen today but the entirety of these *lumads*," Diaz-Abaya said.

The street dancing lasted for almost three hours, clogging the major thoroughfares of Malaybalay City.

Ella Barroso, provincial tourism officer, said there were more visitors this year compared to past celebrations.

SPO1 Graciano Corona Jr. of the Traffic Management Bureau said some 100,000 people were all over the city to watch the street dancing.

The 15-day festival will end today.

'Linya' highlights Lea's vision for Mindanao artists

By Christine Godinez-Ortega
Iligan City

AT LAST! An honest-to-goodness art gallery in Iligan City, which calls for a celebration because one can only count with one's fingers the art galleries in Mindanao.

Today, there is an art gallery each in Butuan and General Santos cities, while the rest are concentrated in Davao City—a gauge perhaps on how many people appreciate art in these difficult times.

Called "Linya," this first art gallery is on the first floor of the GS Padilla Building on Andres Bonifacio Avenue in Tibanga, a busy part of Iligan.

Local artist Lea Padilla's wish for a "serious" art gallery and a place for her art workshop for children have been realized by her parents, Gerardo and Soledad Padilla.

Lea, who finished a Fine Arts course at the University of Santo Tomas and who took up on her own a visual arts course in London, said Linya was a "dream come true."

Aside from painting, teaching art to children had always been Lea's other passion. She used to hold her art workshop every summer in Iligan in the 1980s at a corner of the family-owned bowling alley called "Sampaguita Lanes."

The place burned down in 1998. Lea's early oil paintings on Maranao women, which were displayed there, went up in smoke, too.

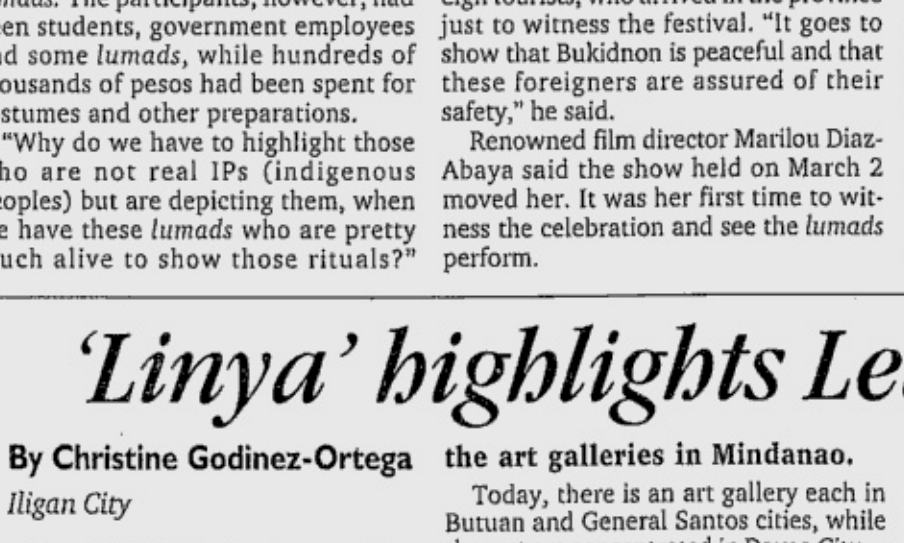
Undaunted, Lea picked up her brush again, established contact with fellow artists, and helped them organize several art exhibits around Mindanao in recent years.

But her dream for a permanent home for her and fellow Mindanao artists' works was always at the back of her mind. With Boston Gallery curator Bobi Valenzuela's technical know-how, the Linya art gallery was set for a good start.

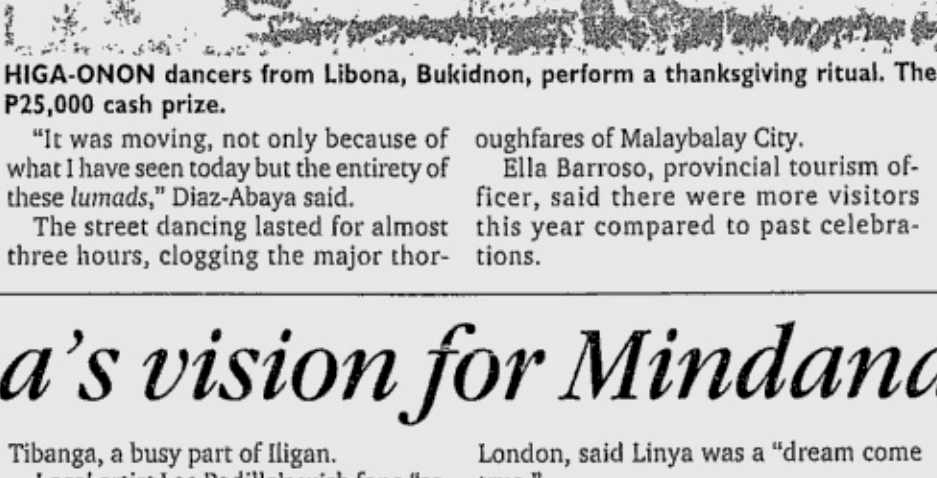
Today, the gallery's all-white walls provide an effective backdrop for the works currently on exhibit by six artists—Michael Bacol, Cris Rollo and Ricky Lluch of Cagayan de Oro City, Kurt Lluch and Lea Padilla of Iligan, and George So of Davao City.

Dubbed "Paghikay (Preparing the Feast)," the opening exhibit features paintings and sculpture that portray scenes of dining, of local delicacies served in a variety of ways and, most poignant, the dialectics of the Filipino family during meals.

Come then to Linya and lose yourself in the gallery's colors and forms shaped by the artist's discipline and boundless vision.



THE LINYA Art Gallery as seen from the outside.



UNTYING the ribbon during the opening ceremony is art gallery owner Soledad "Chol" Padilla with guests, Astrid Boza, Cris Rollo of the Oro Arts Guild, Curator Bobi Valenzuela of the Boston Gallery and Gerardo Padilla. PHOTOS COURTESY OF LINYA ART GALLERY

Woman is new chair of demutualized exchange

From page A1

the voting.

"How could people who were not elected choose the person who would run the board?" Cruz told a press briefing, saying Coyiuto's group would "review the issue and, if necessary, go to court."

Earlier, the 184 members of the stock exchange elected former Philippine National Bank president Peter Favila, former Petron chair Monico Jacob and former Customs Commissioner Tomas Apacible to the board.

They joined five other non-broker members on the PSE board, including former Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Cayetano Paderanga, Ateneo de Manila University professor and constitutionalist Joaquin Bernas, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. chair Eugenio Lopez III and former Manila Electric Co. president Mario Camacho.

Yuchengco's group fielded four candidates for the board, but only two won: Yuchengco and Alicia Arroyo of RCBC Securities.

Coyiuto's group fielded five candidates who all won board seats. They were Coyiuto of R. Coyiuto Securities, Eddie Gobing of Lucky Securities, Federico Lim of Belson Securities, Harry Liu of Summit Securities and Edwin Luy of Triton Securities.

Yuchengco said her immediate priority would be to patch things up with Coyiuto and his group.

But Coyiuto didn't seem to be in the mood for reconciliation. "It's a sad day for the PSE. We have a program that the membership supported," he said.

"With the connivance" of non-brokers, the mandate given by the PSE stockholders to Coyiuto was reversed.

Former PSE chair Trina Kalaw of First Orient Securities and Paul Soo of Abacus Securities said they did not expect the non-brokers to vote.

"They are supposed to be independent representatives to the policy-making body. If they vote for chair, they won't be independent anymore," Kalaw said.

Soo said the non-brokers "overruled the sentiment of the exchange."

But Yuchengco said the law allowed the non-brokers to vote for board chair.

"It's their right to vote. That's why they are there. That's why we are a board. It's their obligation to vote," Yuchengco said.

Ernest Leung

Coyiuto and his group also said they would question the reappointment of former Finance Secretary Ernest Leung as PSE president for a two-year term.

Cruz said Leung never disclosed in his resumé that he was chair of PSE brokerage house DBP Daiwa Securities until last year.

The SRC specifies that the PSE president must not have been affiliated or associated with any brokerage house during the last two years.

But Yuchengco said Leung had assumed the position in an acting capacity, serving the unexpired term of ousted PSE president Ramon T. Garcia from January to March.

Leung said he held the post of DBP-Daiwa chair only in an ex-officio position. He was then chair of the Development Bank of the Philippines.

"That information has always been there all along," he said.

A lot of work

As the first chair of the demutualized exchange, Yuchengco said there was a lot of work to be done.

The exchange demutualized in August last year, converting it from a non-stock organization into a stock corporation with its member brokers as its shareholders.

Asked by reporters when the bourse would be publicly listed, Yuchengco said: "That is part of the demutualization but we have to hire financial advisers and study the process."

"As part of globalization, we have to build up the organization, study all of these things, and make the exchange profitable," Yuchengco said.

She replaced Felipe Yap of F. Yap Securities who was elected two years in a row as PSE chair but did not join this year's race. ***With a report from Reuters***

YUCHENGCO (right) and Leung: Controversial election.

COYIUTO: A sad day for PSE.

LIU: New governor from Coyiuto camp

CRUZ: Mandate was reversed.

PHOTOS BY BETOY JOHNSON

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DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

The Board of Foreign Service Examinations (BFSE) of the Department of Foreign Affairs announces the holding of the –

2002 FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER (FSO) EXAMINATIONS

to recruit candidates for appointment to the position of Foreign Service Officer Class IV (FSO IV).

The FSO examinations consist of three (3) parts which will be held on the following dates:

Qualifying Test : 5 May 2002
Written Examinations : 3, 4 and 5 July 2002
Oral Examinations : To be determined at a later date.

IMPORTANT:

(1) Application forms and relevant information regarding the examinations may be obtained personally or requested through mail from the following offices of the Department of Foreign Affairs:

The Board Secretariat
12/Fl., DFA Building
2330 Roxas Blvd.
Pasay City
Tel. Nos. 834-3083/
3080/
4925/
4923

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Causing-Lozada Bldg.
Osmena Blvd., corner
Lapu-lapu St.
Cebu City
Tel. Nos. (032)
256-3193
253-6798
256-0624

DFA Regional
Consular Office
5/Fl., City Hall Bldg.
Cagayan de Oro City
Tel. Nos. (08822)
724-309
857-2175

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Yulo Street
Iloilo City
Tel. Nos. (033)
336-1737
337-8017

DFA –Mindanao
Doors 1 & 2, Tourism Complex
Magsaysay Park 8000
Davao City
Tel Nos. (802)
227-3900
227-0712
227-0713

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Upper Calarian,
Southcom Bldg.
Zamboanga City
Tel. Nos. (062)
991-4398
991-7958

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Transfield Bldg.
Pagdalagan Norte
San Fernando, La Union
Tel. Nos. (072)
888-3733
888-5484

DFA Regional
Consular Office
3/Fl., City Hall Bldg.
Legaspi City
Tel. Nos. (052)
480-1773
245-5056

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Municipal Building
Tuguegarao, Cagayan Valley
Tel. No. (078)
846-2310

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Manpower Training Center
Better Living Subdivision,
Isabang, Lucena City
Tel. Nos. (042)
710-4526
373-1898

DFA Regional
Consular Office
Paskuhan Village
San Fernando, Pampanga
Tel. Nos. (045)
963-1879
961-6638

(2) Application forms may also be obtained from the Regional Offices of the Civil Service Commission (CSC).

(3) Application forms may also be downloaded from the Department of Foreign Affairs' website: www.dfa.gov.ph and the Civil Service Commission's website: www.csc.gov.ph .

Completed application forms together with the documentary requirements must be returned by the applicants themselves or by postal service to any of the DFA offices enumerated above not later than 5 April 2002 for evaluation and processing.

Erap 'snubs' Gloria

From page A1

as usual," Tiglao said. "Erap is just a detainee (at the VMMC). People still go there, they still play golf there."

Estrada, however, said he was "surprised" at such an unannounced visit from Ms Macapagal.

He said that he was still in bed "reading," and that he had his co-accused son Jinggoy, his wife Sen. Luisa Ejercito, and a maid for company in his detention suite.

"Let's just say that I was not prepared to meet her. I didn't know she was coming. When she first visited me in (my detention quarters in) Sta. Rosa, (Laguna), there was prior notice," he said in Taglish.

Reconciliation

Bulacan Rep. Willie Buyson Villarama, who once served Ms Macapagal as chief of staff, said he had heard about the supposed visit from some friends in the know.

"I was also informed about it but I have no way of confirming it (from the President)," he said when the INQUIRER asked if he knew about the visit. "But if it is true, that's a good sign that she's seeking reconciliation."

He said that "having worked with her for 12 years, that is the GMA I really know—one who is kind and conciliatory."

Villarama said he heard that Estrada had agreed to receive the President but that the meeting somehow did not materialize.

"Maybe it was prearranged, but President Erap had a change of heart, which is rather unfortunate because it shows that GMA is conciliatory even if she is surrounded by hawks," he added.

Villarama, a member of the Aksyon Demokratiko party, was one of the nine pro-administration congressmen who wanted to file a resolution asking the President to send Estrada to exile.

The source, who had phoned the INQUIRER, said Estrada had a change of heart while the President was en route to the hospital in a chopper.

The source, who said he was in contact with someone inside Estrada's suite, disclosed that it was Senator Ejercito who said her husband did not want to see the President.

"He was told that it would not be good for him that the woman (Ms Macapagal) would take the credit," the source said, adding that the President wanted to "reconcile" with Estrada.

Steroids

Estrada said he had yet to get his day's shot of steroids for his arthritic knees when the President arrived.

He said his doctor-wife, who personally injects the steroids, "advised me not to come out" of the bedroom.

"We have nothing to talk about, do we?" he said in the 3:30 p.m. phone interview.

But when contacted again two hours later, Estrada had taken on a different tone.

"I didn't intend to snub her," he said. "I just did not want to be seen on camera limping because I had yet to have my steroids."

Estrada declined to answer when asked what might have been Ms Macapagal's intention in visiting him for the third time since his detention last April.

Jesus Crispin Remulla, one of Estrada's political aides, said the ex-President had instructed the maid to tell the visiting party that "he was still asleep" at the time.

"But actually, he was already taking his coffee and reading the newspaper in his bedroom," Remulla told the INQUIRER.

Remulla said Ms Macapagal was seen accompanied by Perez and a crew of RTVM, Malacañang's in-house broadcast team.

A source in the Estrada camp said Ms Macapagal got to the VMMC using the presidential chopper, touching down around 8:30 a.m.

At the helipad, an advance party from the Presidential Security Group and Perez were apparently supposed to "welcome" her, the source said.

But they were all reportedly made to wait at the "parking area" leading to Estrada's detention suite "for about 10 to 15 minutes," the source said.

The source also said Ms Macapagal and her party immediately left when told that Estrada was not coming out.

"I think that was nothing but politics," Remulla said. "She was again out to show that she's reaching out to him. But he doesn't want to be part of the sham anymore."

Checkpoints

Visitors to Estrada's suite pass through three successive security checkpoints, where they are made to sign their names on logbooks.

The security people make sure that the guests do not carry cell phones, tape recorders and other prohibited items to the suite.

Guests pass through a metal detector before entering the suite's main entrance, which opens to a small living room.

The suite is furnished with a sofa and three dining tables that seat 10 guests each.

From the living room, one can see two rooms where Estrada and his son Jinggoy stay.

Asked what the purpose of the President's visit could have been, the source said: "That's anybody's guess."

He offered his own guess: "GMA is desperately in need of the support of Erap. She feels she's alienated from the masses."

But Tiglao insisted that the President had no plans to see Estrada.

GMA caught in prongs of dilemma, says official

From page A1

vised his successor to "stop acting out a movie."

"If he thinks that he is Jose Rizal, he is not," Ramos said upon arriving at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport from yet another business trip in Asia for the government.

Ramos was reacting to Estrada's letter to the Sandiganbayan asking the special division trying his case to stop going through the motions and just throw him behind bars.

"Many people have been under fire before, and they faced their problems. Why shouldn't he?" Ramos said.

PlunderWatch spokesperson Fr. Joe Dizon said: "For the first time, we agree with Mr. Estrada. Send him to jail."

Dizon added: "How dare Estrada cry injustice when it is he and his lawyers who have been trying to sabotage the plunder trial from Day One?"

Pressure

Ms Macapagal is now under pressure from a congressional team composed of Speaker Jose de Venecia and Senators Edgardo Angara, Blas Ople and Aquilino Pimentel Jr.—all former Senate presidents—to find a way to get the Sandiganbayan to allow medical treatment abroad for Estrada.

The administration official confirmed that Estrada's plan was to first seek medical treatment in the United States, with exile as the "second phase."

A number of administration lawmakers are also pushing for his medical treatment and/or exile, ostensibly to do away with the threat to political stability.

De Venecia met with the three opposition leaders Thursday in an effort to use what he termed "parliamentary diplomacy" to solve the Estrada problem. The Speaker reportedly met with Ms Macapagal Thursday night.

But yesterday, De Venecia issued a statement saying that "even with the best of intentions, we will not undertake the peacemaking, back-channeling effort unless the former President, who is facing trial, accepts the imperative to place himself under the jurisdiction of the court."

"We will continue to pursue and undertake parliamentary diplomacy if there is full recognition of this by Mr. Estrada," he said, adding that he would convey his position to Ople, Angara and Pimentel.

"Like all citizens of the Republic, Mr. Estrada must have a healthy respect for the law and the judicial system. I now appeal to him to return to the judicial process," De Venecia said.

He also said there would be more extensive consultations to find the "true sentiment" of the people, "and after that, we will act to defuse the political tension so that we can now concentrate fully our energies and talents on economic development."

Mobilization

According to the administration official, a "semi-serious mobilization" of Estrada supporters is going on in slum areas.

The official calculated that if the Estrada camp paid P1,000 for every warm body, it needed to shell out only P100 million to mobilize 100,000 people to mount a so-called "Edsa IV" on or before May 1, the first anniversary of the Labor Day attack on Malacañang.

"(The amount of) P100 million is nothing (to Estrada), but 100,000 is a lot of people," the official said.

To counter the pro-Estrada mobilization, the official said, the government was implementing anti-poverty measures such as distributing land titles, granting emergency employment and tapping the network of barangays.

Ms Macapagal's quandary is not lost on pro-Estrada congressmen.

"I don't know why the Palace is so stupid not to see the truth facing it," a Metro Manila congressman identified with Estrada told the INQUIRER Thursday. "It is Joseph Estrada who stands in the way of Gloria being President for the rest of his term in 2004 and a second term of another six years."

The congressman said the solution to the problem was "just one phone call away."

"It would have been so easy to get rid of the biggest problem," the congressman said. "But a stupid issue like this has already cost her three weeks, and they don't know what to do."

In the opinion of Bulacan Rep. Wilfrido Villarama, "at this point, Estrada has the ace."

Villarama said that in the eyes of the people, especially the masses who swept Estrada to the presidency, their idol was being persecuted.

"What's happening to Erap and his family is cruelty, and this is creating a backlash (against the administration)," the lawmaker said. "There is no humanity in the proceedings. The trial has to be fair, and the (government) lawyers have to admit that he has to have a fair shake."

He also said "certain basic procedures" were violated, such as in the appointment of the justices composing the Sandiganbayan special division.

Full faith

But the IBP statement signed by its president, lawyer Teofilo Pilando, said it was "affirm(ing) its full faith in the judicial system, and remind(ing) the citizenry, particularly the legal profession, of the duty to promote respect for law and legal processes."

The PBA and PJA criticized Estrada for his attack on the courts.

"To question the impartiality and fairness of this system, without basis, is to question our very way of life," said PBA president Judge Federico Alikpala. "In terminating the services of his lawyers and claiming that he will not get justice from our courts, Mr. Estrada is trampling on our justice system."

Alikpala chided Estrada's dismissed lawyers for their failure to properly advise the ex-President.

"Lawyers are officers of the judiciary and every barrister is bound by oath to protect and preserve the integrity of the justice system. As officers of the court, Mr. Estrada's lawyers are duty bound to advise him to apologize for his baseless denunciation," Alikpala said.

PJA president Judge Danilo Pine rallied support for the Supreme Court, saying its creation of the Sandiganbayan special division to exclusively hear Estrada's cases was "only in obedience to its mandated duty to uphold the constitutional right of the former President to a speedy trial."

"To berate the Supreme Court for effecting its constitutional duty is clearly and plainly inexcusable conduct on the part of (Estrada's) defense team," Pine added.

Hostage

"Running priest" Fr. Robert Reyes said Estrada was now "holding our courts hostage."

"He's no fool, and I think he even has a higher IQ and EQ (emotional quotient) than (the President), which makes him very dangerous," Reyes said at the weekly Sulo Hotel media forum.

Reyes also said Estrada was succeeding in "playing with our culture, our penchant for the underdog."

"He knows exactly what we want to watch," Reyes said, but warned that Filipinos would lose all trust in the government should Malacañang, Congress or the judiciary "provide an exit" for Estrada as a matter of political expedience.

Dizon of PlunderWatch said Estrada's dismissed lawyers had "no objective whatsoever of seeing this case through because they know the evidence against (him) is overwhelming."

Teodoro Casiño, secretary general of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, said Estrada should be sent, not to jail, but to the mental hospital.

"Estrada's case is one of severe delusion bordering on the psychotic," Casiño said in reaction to Estrada's claim that he was still president. "He should be sent immediately to the mental hospital where he rightfully belongs. He needs a lobotomy more than a knee implant."

Casiño also said Estrada's plea to be sent to jail was an outright lie, because "this is precisely what he and his lawyers have been trying to prevent since his arrest."

"Estrada does not want to go to jail. He wants to go the United States to escape," Casiño said. ***With reports from Norman Bordadora, Volt Contreras and Agnes E. Donato***

Who'll get TV rights to RP wedding of year?

MIKEY with Angela: I want everyone to have access to my wedding.

From page A1

But the 32-year-old Arroyo yesterday denied he negotiated with any TV networks for the exclusive coverage of his June wedding, which is already being tagged as the wedding of the year.

"I don't want people to say I'm making money out of my own wedding," Arroyo told the INQUIRER. "I want everyone to have access to my wedding, whether you're from TV or print media."

He said the TV networks were the ones who wanted to negotiate with him for the wedding coverage. "But we still don't know if we will make it exclusive to a particular network," he said.

Like the wedding of Irene Marcos during her late father's reign and of Jackie Ejercito during her own father's short-lived rule, the altar date of President Macapagal-Arroyo's eldest son is also expected to be a big event.

The TV coverage will include the *pamanhikan* on Valentine's Day, the bridal shower, the wedding ceremony in Pampanga and the two receptions, according to the TV network insider.

'Not extravagant'

The Arroyo-Montenegro wedding is also expected to be as grand and as widely covered as the nuptials of Richard Gomez and Lucy Torres, Cesar Montano and Sunshine Cruz, Aga Muhlach and Charlene Gonzales of show business. Arroyo, vice governor of Pampanga, is also a part-time actor, although he is far from being as big a star as Gomez, Montano and Muhlach.

Ms Macapagal and her lawyer-husband Mike Arroyo reportedly want a "simple but not extravagant wedding" for their eldest son.

But the Arroyo-Montenegro nuptials would be far from "simple."

Two receptions are being planned for over a thousand VIPs. The first reception will be held in the courtyard of the centuries-old San Agustin Church in Lubao, Pampanga, where the couple will exchange marriage vows. Former Presidents Cory Aquino and Fidel Ramos are among the principal sponsors.

In the evening, a cocktail reception will be held in Malacañang.

His happiest day

Arroyo said he wanted a big reception so he could invite his Pampanga constituents. "I want my provincemates to be with me on the happiest day of my life," he said.

His bride will wear a gown by Joe Salazar and shoes by Lila Almario. Patrick Rosas will do her hair and makeup.

Rita Neri, who also organized the Aga Muhlach-Charlene Gonzales nuptials in Baguio, is the Arroyo-Montenegro wedding coordinator.

Arroyo's 28-year-old bride is the daughter of Herman and Charito Montenegro. She is an international business graduate of the Schiller University in London. She went to grade school and high school at Assumption College.

Her older brother Greg, an economics graduate of Wharton University in Philadelphia, married actress Ana Roces last Jan. 20.

Arroyo's sister Evangelina "Luli" Lourdes and brother Diosdado "Dato" Ignacio Jose Maria are both not married.

Arroyo and Montenegro met in March last year at a family reunion. Arroyo said he fell for her *mestiza* looks and decided to ask her for a date.

Yes, she said

Montenegro at first was not romantically interested in Arroyo because they are second cousins. But after consulting family members and getting their approval, Montenegro went on several dates with Arroyo until she said "yes."

"We have thought about it many times," Arroyo said in an earlier interview where he denied they had a whirlwind courtship. "We are very familiar with each other."

Arroyo said that even while they were planning the wedding, he would continue to perform his duties as Pampanga vice governor.

He is also set to make three movies this year, after starring in the Metro Manila Film Festival entry, "Di Kita Ma-Reach," last December. He was nominated festival best actor, but he lost to "Bagong Buwan" lead Cesar Montano.

In total earnings during the festival, the Arroyo movie placed last in a field of seven films.

Jo Ramos and actor Lloyd Samartino were married in Malacañang in 1992 when Jo's father Fidel V. Ramos was President. Jackie Ejercito and Beaver Lopez took their turn in 1999, two years before her father Joseph Estrada would be ousted President.

Network battle

The Ejercito-Lopez wedding was widely covered by media.

Rivals ABS-CBN and GMA-7 have been battling for the exclusive rights to air celebrity weddings, including those of show biz personalities.

ABS-CBN crew and equipment were sent to Ormoc City in Leyte to cover the wedding of Richard and Lucy in 1998. In September 2000, ABS-CBN also clinched the TV rights to the garden wedding of Montano and Cruz at the Coconut Palace at the CCP Complex.

In May 2001, ABS-CBN aired a two-hour special from Baguio City during the Muhlach-Gonzales wedding.

GMA-7 had exclusive coverage of the weddings of singer-actress Donna Cruz and dentist Yong Larazabal, politician-singer Dingdong Avanzado and singer-actress Jessa Zaragoza, athlete David Bunevacz and talent manager Jessica Rodriguez, actress Mikee Cojuangco and basketball player Dodot Jaworski.

US doctor treats 2 Abu Sayyaf victims

From page A1

said, referring to the wounded siblings.

He said the Abu Sayyaf had been threatening Muslim residents of the town, demanding food and water and warning them not to inform the military of their presence.

The United States and the Philippines launched joint operations against the Abu Sayyaf on Jan. 31 in an extension of its war on terrorism.

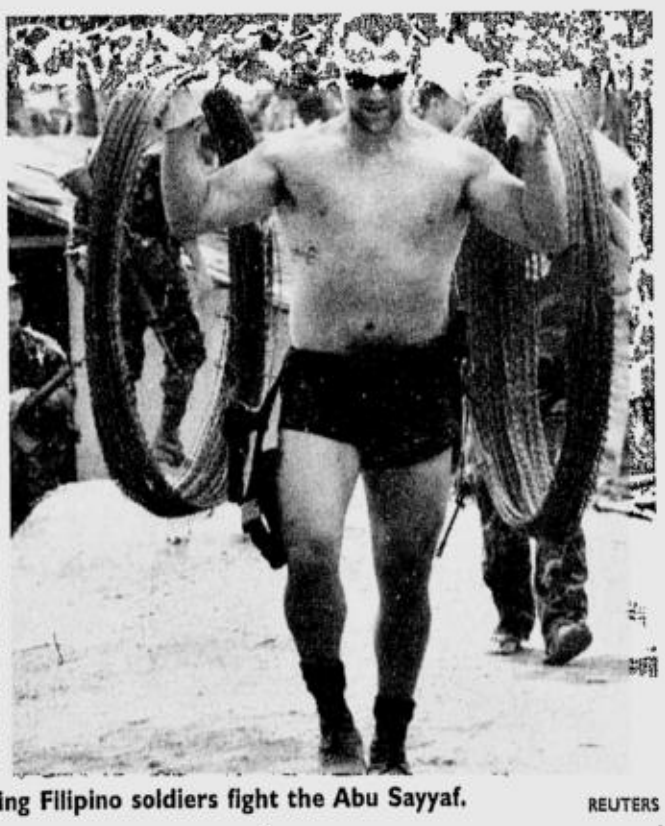
The Abu Sayyaf, who are notorious for kidnapping foreigners and Christians in Mindanao, are holding two American missionaries and a Filipino nurse hostage in Basilan.

The bandits have been linked to the al-Qaida network of Osama bin Laden, the suspected mastermind of the Sept. 11 terror attacks in the United States.

About 660 US troops have been deployed in the Philippines for the six-month Balikatan 02-1 war games.

Aside from assisting local residents in civil-military operations, the 160 US Special Forces troops in Basilan are helping train local soldiers to hunt down the Abu Sayyaf.

Although the US troops are armed and authorized to fire back if attacked, they are not supposed to take part in any combat against the Abu Sayyaf. ***AFP***



US Special Forces troops fortify their jungle camp in Upper Mahayahay in Basilan where they are training Filipino soldiers fight the Abu Sayyaf. REUTERS

Riegger up by 2 strokes

CORAL SPRINGS—John Riegger completed a course-record 9-under 63 in the rain-delayed first round, then added a 69 in the second Friday to take a two-stroke lead over Paul Casey in the Honda Classic.Riegger was the clubhouse leader at 12 under when the second round was halted because of darkness.

SundaySPORTS

Editor Al S. Mendoza • Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

Red Bull, Coca Cola triumph /A22
UST, FEU spikers score /A23
Raptors snap losing spell /A24

CASINO FILIPINO RP OPEN

Gibson threatens to win pulling away

13-year Manila resident from Canada builds 6-shot margin; Miñoza collapses

THE LEADERS
Rick Gibson (Can) 68-69-73=210
Anthony Kang (Kor) 74-69-73=216
Chawalit Plaphol (Tha) 72-70-74=216
Tony Lascuna (Phi) 71-70-75=216
Kang Wook-soon (Kor) 75-71-71=217

By Al S. Mendoza

CANADIAN Rick Gibson built a six-shot lead yesterday using a day-long patience and threatened to win the Casino Filipino 87th Philippine Open running away on a day Frankie Miñoza kissed his title hopes goodbye.

"It was a day of patience," said Gibson, rescuing a 1-over-par 73 in swirling winds to wheel him- self into position of winning the fabled Open on his eighth try. "I'm relieved the day's over."

Adding his 68-69, the 40- year-old Gibson led three rivals from three different countries by 6 shots with his 6- under-par total of 210 and, like a pedigreed thoroughbred, looked ready to score a wire-to-wire victory.

Tied for second at 216 were 1999 champion Anthony Kang (73) of South Korea, Chawalit Plaphol (74) of Thailand and Filipino Tony Lascuna (75), almost assuring a tight battle for second place but not, seemingly, the crown.

The monster that is Wack Wack East turned to its meanest yesterday and yielded only two sub-par rounds after an avalanche of 12 and 11 under-par results, respectively, in Rounds 1 and 2.

Blown literally into smithereens was Miñoza's dream of pocketing his second RP Open as the 1998 champion became Wack Wack's most prominent casualty in the tournament sponsored by San Miguel Corporation in cooperation with Mitsubishi Motors.

"This is my worse round ever since I turned pro," said the rueful pro of 18 years, whose 81 uglified not only his illustrious career but a tournament wanting in homegrown heroes.

Added Miñoza: "Bad, bad putting. I will never understand what happened to me out there today."

An omen of bad things to come happened right on the first hole, when Miñoza missed a six-footer for par after a missed green. He three-putted No. 5 from 16 feet, missing an uphill six-footer coming back.

Miñoza next stumbled into back-to-back bogeys from the seventh on two missed greens, flubbing a three-footer for par on 8 for a fat 40 going out.

After a regulation on 10, he missed the green anew on 11 and then three-putted from 12 feet for his first of two double bogeys. When he birdied the par-5 14th after a missed eagle, he thought that was the trigger for his comeback.

Wrong. He went four-over on his last four holes on three more missed greens. He double-bogeyed the par-3 17th, visiting twice the bunkers from both sides of the elevated green.

At 223 after earlier doing 70-72, the 42-year-old Miñoza was out of it as he trailed Gibson by 13 strokes with today's last round remaining.

All in all, Miñoza's one-birdie round was tattooed with six bogeys and two double bogeys for nines of 40-41, making his scorecard look like a dirt road pockmarked by holes with puddles of water in them.

The Alabang-based (Muntinlupa) Gibson, a 13-year RP resident, had also appeared headed for purgatory with three bogeys on his first six holes to allow Filipino Antonio Lascuna to cut the Canadian's lead to just one.

But Lascuna sprang a leak with bogeys on 7 and 9 and trailed Gibson by 3 going out.

Hard as he did coming home, Lascuna couldn't gain ground against the steady Gibson, whose nerves of steel battled menacing winds that went unpredictable as the day wore on.

When Lascuna, a former national champion, bogeyed 13 on a missed green, Gibson saw it as an opening and birdied 14 and 15 before coasting home with routine pars on his last three holes for an impregnable back nine 34.

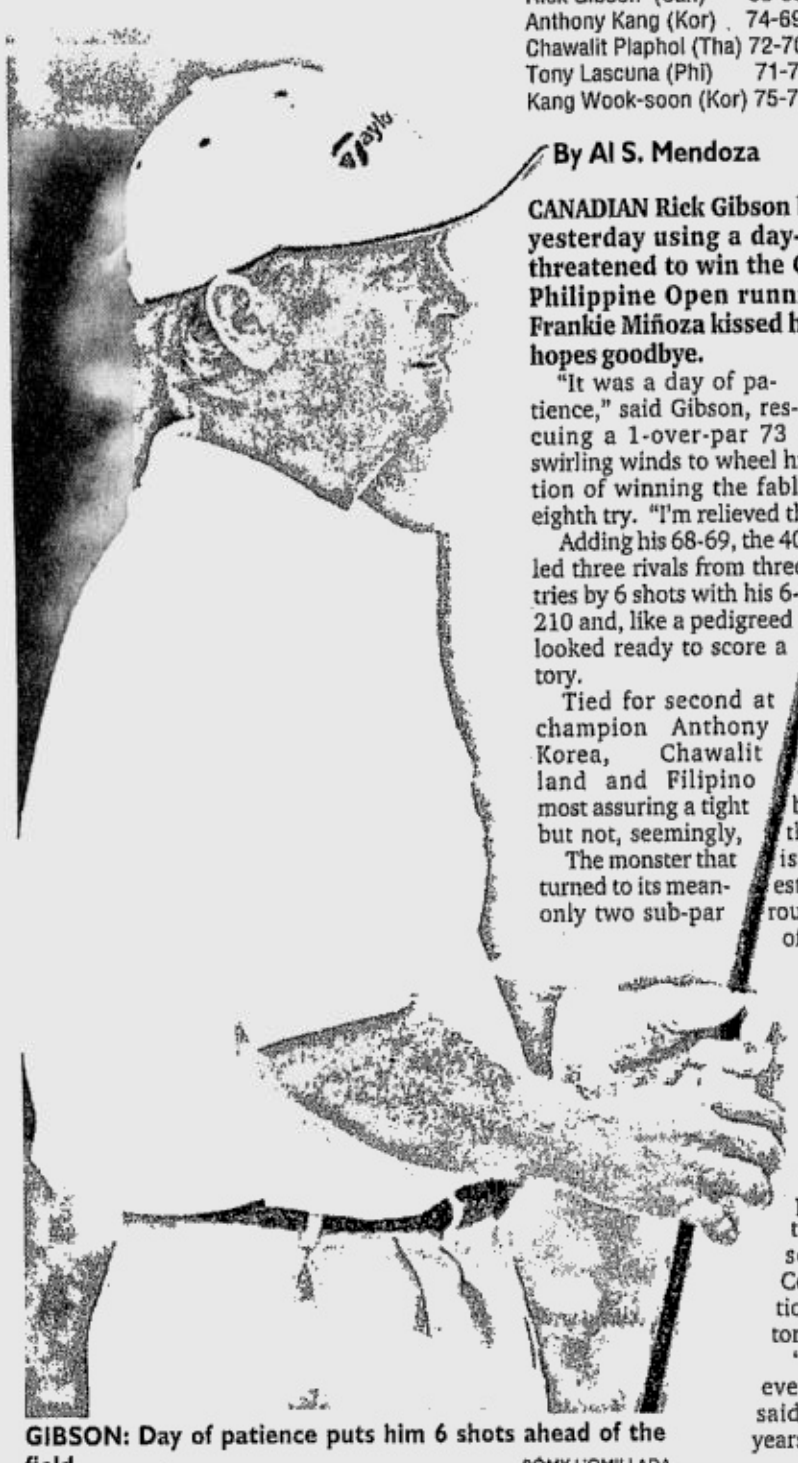
"He is a very solid player," said the 34-year-old Lascuna of Gibson. *"Mahirap nang habulin pero* we'll see. Fight, fight, fight *pa rin*."

Gibson said he was not yet looking at a victory.

"No," he said. "Six strokes isn't safe yet."

Any strategy? Any prediction for a winning round?

"I need an under-par tomorrow to really win it," he said. "I'd like another one of that after I made over-par today for the first time in three days."



GIBSON: Day of patience puts him 6 shots ahead of the field. ROMY HOMILLADA

Other scorers:
218—Danny Chia (Mas) 73-73-72
219—Greg Hanrahan (USA) 70-68-81, Rhey Luna (Phi) 73-74-72
220— Pablo Del Olmo (Mex) 72-72-76, Kim Jong-myung (Kor) 72-73-75, Angelo Que (Phi) 69-73-78, Robert Jacobson (USA) 78-74-68
221— Robert Pactolerin (Phi) 77-72-72, Gerald Rosales (Phi) 74-73-74, Mo Joong-kyung (Kor) 73-73-75, Kim Sang-ki (Kor) 69-75-77
222— Aaron Meeks (USA) 75-72-75, Sushi Ishigaki (Jpn) 73-73-76, Terry Pilkadaris (Aus) 73-77-72
223— Gerry Norquist (USA) 78-68-77, Frankie Minoza (Phi) 70-72-81, Somkiat Srisanga (Tha) 75-74-74, Saneh Saengsui (Tha) 71-74-78, Joon Choi (Kor) 74-75-74, Jim Johnson (USA) 72-75-76, Marlon Dizon (Phi) 72-75-76, Lam Chih Bing (Sin) 70-75-78, Tatsuya Shiraishi (Jpn) 73-76-74, Dominique Boulet (Hkg) 71-77-75
224—Akio Sadakata (Jpn) 77-70-77, Danny Zarate (Phi) 80-71-73, Chris Kamin (USA) 78-73-73, Benjie Magada (Phi) 75-74-75, Amandeep Johl (Ind) 74-75-75, Jerome Delariarte (Phi) 73-75-76, Atthaphon P'manee (Tha) 72-75-77, Hsu Mong-nan (Twn), 70-75-79
225— James Stewart 75-73-77, Carito Villaroman (Phi) 75-75-75, Elmer Salvador (Phi) 75-75-75, Clay Devers (USA) 73-76-76, Kyi Hia Han (Myn) 70-78-77

MIÑOZA: "Bad, bad putting." ROMY HOMILLADA

God's reminder

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

AFTER the third round of the Ericsson Philippine Open in 1998, Frankie Miñoza was the leader by one over a 25-year-old, 6-foot-1 American named Christian Chernock, a 177-pounder from Plano, Texas.

Back then, Miñoza was talking about how the wind will affect the outcome of the 83rd Open. He was saying Chernock is good and he will need a lot of hard work to beat the skinny Texan, a winner a week back of the Thailand Open.

The following day, Miñoza fired an even-par-72 at Riviera's Couples to beat Chernock by two strokes and win his first ever RP Open after turning pro in 1984.

Today, Miñoza's dream of scoring a second Open victory will remain that way—a dream. It will take a miracle for him to realize it after shooting an 81 yesterday and trailing Canadian Rick Gibson by 13 strokes with today's last round left to play.

"Golf," he was telling sportswriters yesterday, "is such a difficult game."

He was smiling. But I wasn't born yesterday.

He was smiling from the outside, but he was hurting from the inside.

"Never in my life did I score an 81 since I turned pro," said Frankie, who turned pro in 1984.

"I can't remember him shoot even an 80," said Thirdy Escano, Frankie's buddy of many years.

Only a day before, he shot 72. The day before that, he fired 70. With two rounds completed, he was just five shots behind Gibson.

He was blaming putting. But maybe, he was just being polite. If he said it was bad golf altogether, we would have understood anyway. Or, to be exact, golfers would have understood. Easily. Who said golf was that easy?

You shoot pebbles into a lake with bare hands and that's chicken feed.

But is shooting birdies with golf clubs chicken feed all the time?

You shoot even par today, tomorrow you will never know what's going to happen. That's why golf is called the game of mistakes. You make mistakes and that's normal. What's abnormal is when you don't make even a single mistake in 18 of golf.

It was just so bizarre that Frankie Miñoza made a lot of mistakes yesterday. In effect, he took the game literally for his mistake-filled 81. What made it more gory was that he did it in the Philippine Open, a tournament where one is supposed to dish out his best at all times.

Still, you are forgetting something if you will insist on that.

Golf, let me remind one and all again, is not a game of perfection. Never. I have this feeling God allowed man to invent the game to remind mankind that only God is perfect.

Try to spell golf in reverse and you'll see what I mean.

Fil-Estate to conduct tennis, swimming camps

THE FIL-ESTATE Sports Foundation Inc. (FESFI) will conduct summer tennis and swimming training camps starting next month.

FESFI chair Robert John L. Sobrepeña said that the summer training programs for tennis and swimming is part of the foundation's unending commitment to help in the development of sports in the country.

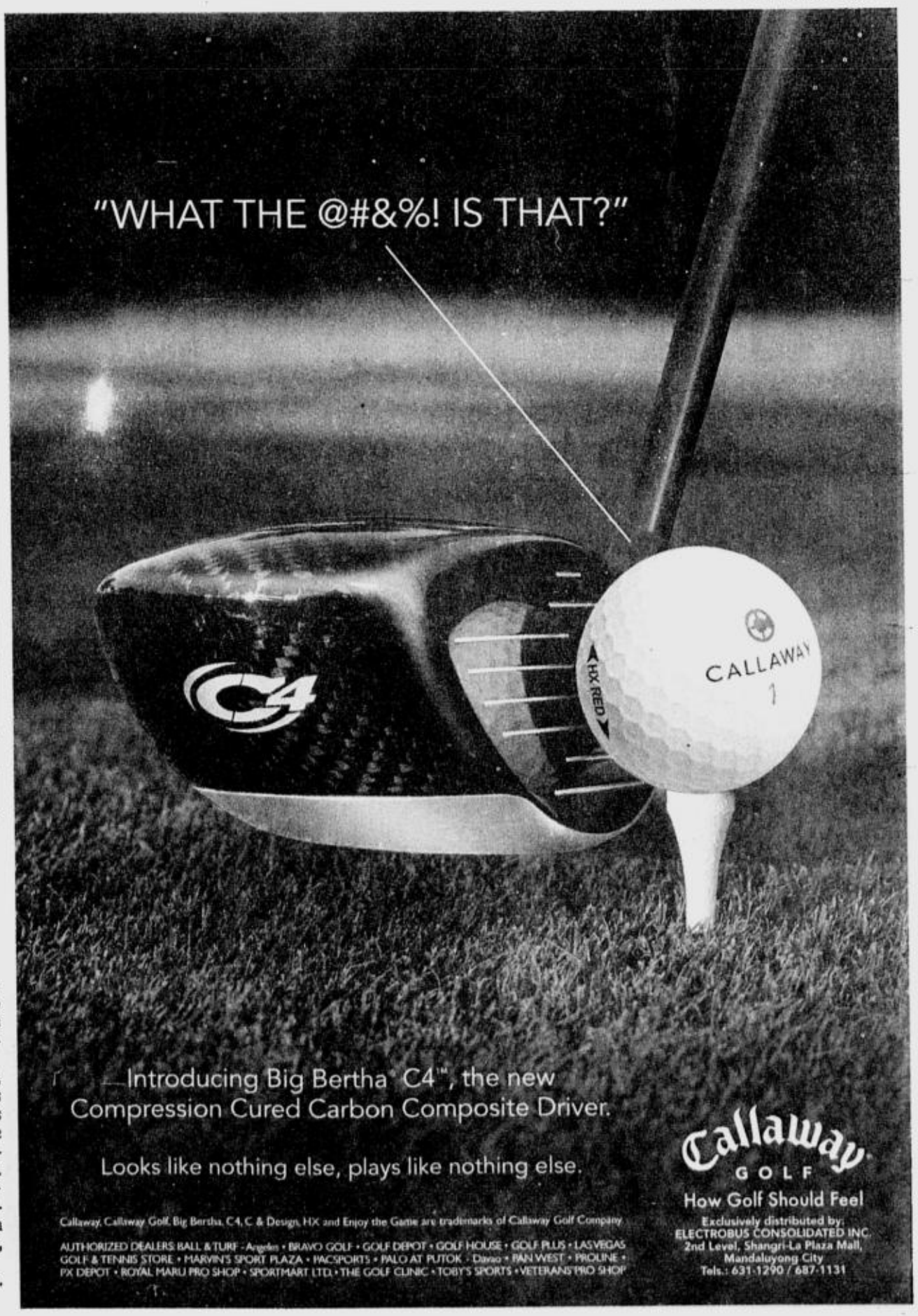
"We have a good chance of excelling in tennis and swimming internationally. We now have results to back it up. This is definitely a step toward a long journey in bringing back the glory of Philippine Sports," Sobrepeña said.

The Manila Southwoods Sports Club inside the sprawling Manila Southwoods Golf and Country Club will host the tennis camps from April 6 to May 26. The training camps will be held at the Bramante Piazza (2nd Flr., Renaissance Towers, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City) on April 1 to May 29. Manny Tecson, a former World Group Davis Cup player, will conduct the training. Training fees are P2,500 (beginners) and P3,000 (intermediate).

Summer swimming lessons, on the other hand, will be held also in the Manila Southwoods Sports Club on April 4 to May 26. Training fees are P2,500 for beginners and P3,000 for advance participants. Abet Alon-Alon, a member of Philippine National Team, will conduct the training.

Sponsors are CAP Philippines, RR Payumo + Partners, Camp John Hay, Bramante Piazza, Manila Southwoods Manor Hotel, Manila Southwoods Sports Club, Wilson Sports, Adidas, Skycable and Splash Island.

For details call Ms. Len Gregorio or Ms. Chimes Placido at 638-2249.



Red Bull tames Hapee-RP

By June Navarro

GAMES TODAY: (Ynares Center)
4 p.m.—FedEx vs Alaska
6 p.m.—Shell vs San Miguel

BATANG Red Bull erased the stigma of a lopsided setback against Alaska after beating Hapee-RP Team in overtime, 90-82, last night to earn a piece of the lead with Purefoods in the PBA Governors Cup at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Willie Miller came up with the pivotal baskets in the extra period, hitting a triple and completing a fastbreak off a steal inside two minutes as the Thunder went on to register their fourth win in five starts.

The 5-foot-8 playmaker also rescued the Thunder from the brink of defeat after he drained a 25-footer with 14.6 seconds left in regulation to peg the count at 75-all going into overtime.

Hapee-RP Team couldn't have suffered its second setback in three games and halted its three-game streak had Danny Ildefonso knocked in a crucial jumper as time expired in regulation.

Earlier, Coca-Cola weathered a fourth quarter comeback by Barangay Ginebra to prevail, 82-74.

For the second time around, Ron Hale dished off an impressive performance, capping his feat with two free throws and a rim-rattling slam in the final 18 seconds to stop the rampaging Kings on their tracks.

The Tigers fortified their stranglehold of the third spot after picking up their fourth victory in six outings. The Kings, on the other hand, plunged to 1-4 in a tie with Selecta-RP team at the bottom of the standings.

The Tigers transformed a slim 51-48 halftime lead to an imposing 72-58 spread in the third period through the efforts of Roselle Ellis and Hale.

But the Kings came charging back in the last 10 minutes as Mark Caguioa and Desmond Fergusson joined hands.

Fergusson, who erupted for 30 points, buried his eighth triple of the night, while Caguioa drained three straight jumpers that trimmed down a huge gap to a 74-78 deficit.

COCA-COLA 82—Hale 28, Ellis 24, Ballesteros 10, Manalo 10, Morano 7, Bolado 2, Antonio 1, Avenido 0.

GINEBRA 74—Fergusson 30, Gee 12, Caguioa 12, Limpot 10, Tolomia 6, Malabanan 4, David 0, Helterbrand 0, Ong 0. Quarters: 27-24, 51-48, 72-58, 82-74

RED BULL 90—Bunn 28, Miller 16, Nwosu 14, Tugade 12, Villoria 10, Hizon 3, Torion 3, Mendoza 2, Velez 2, Locsin 0.

HAPEE-RP TEAM 82—Fernandez 20, Aquino 17, Ildefonso 15, Hatfield 10, Cariaso 6, Camaso 5, Ritualo 5, Feihl 4, Seigle 0. Quarters: 19-23, 43-38, 56-54, 75 all, 90-82 ot

SPORTSWATCH

Agassi gains semis

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona—Andre Agassi has a huge following in Scottsdale, just as Pete Sampras does. Unlike Sampras, Agassi didn't disappoint his fans. The top-seeded Agassi handled upset specialist Juan Ignacio Chela of Argentina, 7-5, 6-7 (5), 6-1 Friday to move into the semifinals of the Franklin Templeton Tennis Classic. "He's a real good player," Agassi said about the 22-year-old Argentine, who went from 810th to 71st in ATP placement last year by winning six titles on the Challenger circuit. Agassi persevered through the 2-hour, 26-minute match less than a day after Wayne Ferreira eliminated Sampras, who was seeded third, in straight sets. No. 7 Xavier Malisse, who beat Ferreira 7-5, 6-2 later Friday, stands between Agassi and his second straight final. *AP*

Clijsters bundled out

INDIAN WELLS, California—Unseeded Frenchwoman Nathalie Dechy ousted ailing top seed Kim Clijsters 6-2, 7-5 to reach the third round of the WTA Tour Tier One event here on Friday. Clijsters, runner-up to Serena Williams in the final at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden last year, hadn't played since losing to eventual champion Jennifer Capriati in the semi-finals of the Australian Open in January. *AFP*

Wi leads Dubai tilt

DUBAI—A Korean born golfer, who once dreamed of playing big time baseball in the United States, headed the field at the halfway stage of the Dubai Desert Classic on Friday. Charlie Wi superbly upstaged his more fancied opponents to finish with a one stroke leader on the second day of the one-million-pound event being played on the Emirates course. Wi moved to nine under par and clear of South African Ernie Els who conjured up the shot of the day to eagle the last in a round of 68 and finish in second place. *AFP*

P9.5-M DEBT

PNB gives PSC reprieve

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BUHAIN

THE HEAVILY indebted Philippine Sports Commission got a much-needed boost last week when the Philippine National Bank agreed to give the sports agency a reprieve of its outstanding credit amounting to P9.5 million in letter of credits.

PSC chair Eric Buhain said the amount was part of the P65-million debt obligation of the agency which accumulated through the years and is now being slowly acted upon through various ways.

The PSC chief said last Feb. 19, the PNB auto-debited the P9.5 million of LOCs which was set to mature on March 22 yet.

But Buhain, along with PSC's deputy executive director for finance Ed Mateo, had a lengthy discussion with officials of the PNB branch inside the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

"Fortunately, they agreed to our proposal and have been very considerate of the PSC's current financial situation," said Buhain. "We struck an agreement to make our obligations look like a loan with extended terms."

Under the agreed term, the PSC will pay P19 million in two years' time, inclusive of the interests and penalties. The agreement gave the PSC a breather from its debt obligations which consists of P37 million in unpaid supplies and P28 million in LOCs.

Meanwhile, the PSC has forged a deal with Adidas to be the official outfitter of the national delegation to the Busan Asian Games although the logo design has yet to be released to the public.

Ex- champs to get Elorde awards

FORMER world champions Luisito Espinosa, Erbito Salavarria and Eric Chaves and World Boxing Council President Jose Sulaiman will receive special awards and citations during the second Gabriel "Flash" Elorde Annual Awards set March 25 at the Hotel Inter-Continental.

Espinosa was the World Boxing Association and World Boxing Council bantamweight champion from 1989 to 1991 and from 1995-99. At about the same period, Chavez became the International Boxing Federation miniflyweight champion, from 1989 to 1990.

Salavarria reigned as the WBC and WBA flyweight from 1970-73 and from 1975-76.

The three will receive special awards as former world champions in the Gabriel Elorde Banquet of Champions—Annual Awards, presented for the second straight year by the Elorde clan in honor of boxing greats who did the country proud in international competitions," said Johnny Elorde, son of the legendary world champion.

The Annual Awards is sponsored by PCSO, Pagcor, San Miguel, Family Rubbing Alcohol and Centrum.

The 2001 Boxer of the year award will be conferred on IBC world superbantamweight champion Manny Pacquiao by Vice President Teofisto Guingona.

The other awardees are Rudy Salud, the first WBC secretary and general and currently a boxing promoter, GAB chair Eduardo Villanueva, Philippine-based international referee Bruce Mctavish, MMDA chair and former Luzon Professional Boxing Association (Luzproba) President Ben Abalos and Pasay Mayor and former boxing judge Peewee Trinidad.

Tanamor, Paylo prevail; RP assured of 2 bronzes

BAKU, Azerbaijan—Team Caltex Philippines assured itself of two bronze medals through the efforts of Harry Tanamor and Violito Payla on Thursday in the Prof. Anwar Chowdry Cup here.

Tanamor and Payla, two of the youngest boxers in the Team Caltex Philippines' pool preparing for the coming Asian Games in Busan, South Korea, posted contrasting quarterfinal wins before a huge and appreciative crowd at the Olympic Sports Center. The 20-year-old Tanamor, a Zamboanga City native who won a bronze in the 2001 World Championship in Ireland, turned Khaduri Zviadi of Georgia into a virtual punching bag en route to a 20-9 decision in the 48 kilogram division.

The 22-year-old Payla, on the other hand, struggled against Kumar Akhil of India in their 51-kg. duel which ended in a 16-16 count. The Cagayan de Oro native and winner of gold in the 2001 Roberto Balado Cup in Cuba, however, earned a seat in the semifinals by throwing the most number of punches.

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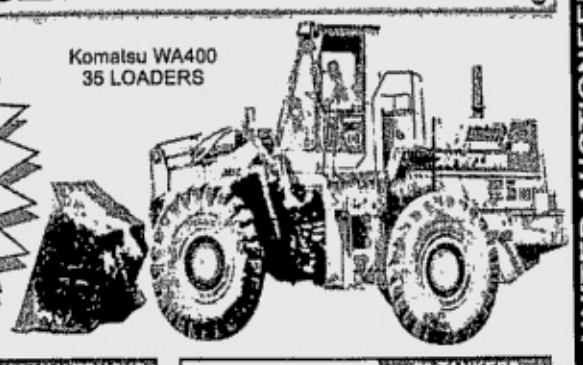

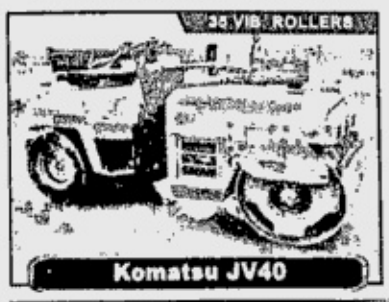

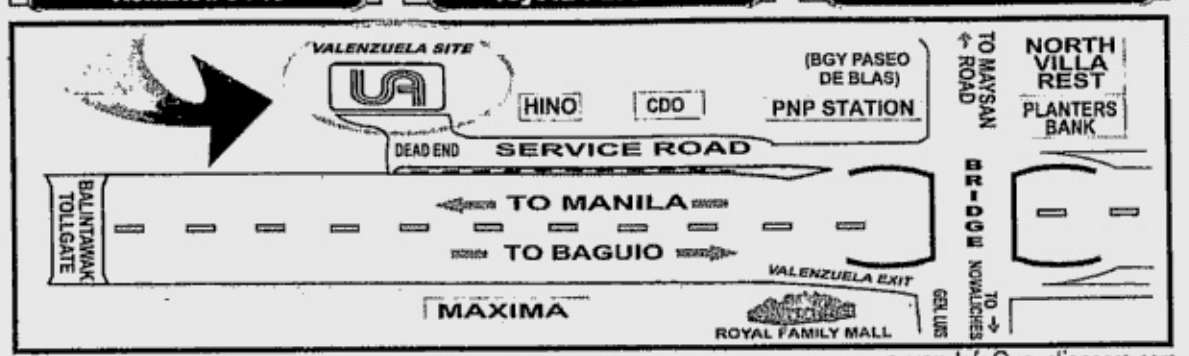

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'Comedians' invade Santa Ana Park

(RAMON Magsaysay High School (España, Manila), the country's No. 1 high school, is celebrating its 43rd founding anniversay with a grand alumni reunion on March 15 at the Maharlika Lounge of Casino Filipino in Parañaque. The affair, to be hosted by Batch '77 (my Silip Boy belongs to topnotch Batch '79), starts at 6 p.m. For details, call Rachel Reyes-Sescon at 928-8671, loc. 15; Lyn Chavarria-Hernandez at 781-4877 or 0917-7951088, and Grace Sanchez at 631-7807 or 0917-6106599.)

* * *

RACING fans got the shock of their lives when racing coverage at the Santa Ana Park suddenly went astray starting last Wednesday night.

All of them asked: "What happened to Andy Sevilla and Co.? Who are those curently annotating the races?

Just like the rest, me and my Silip Boy were also at a loss.

We got numerous calls, fax messages and e-mails the past two days regarding that circumstance and one of those who called our attention was a reader from Arlegui, Manila. Read on.

Mr. Edwin Villanueva
Asst. Sports Editor/Columnist
Philippine Daily Inquirer

Dear Mr. Villanueva:

Ako po ay masugid na mambabasa ng inyong sikat na sikat na column *na* "One Winner" *at nais ko pong ibahagi sa inyo ang natitiyak kong damdamin ng karamihan sa bayang kareristа ukol sa pagkawala ng grupo ni* Mr. Andy Sevilla *sa* Santa Ana racing television coverage.

Bakit po mga komedyanteng alang alam sa karera ang ipinalit kina Andy and Co.? Entertainment *din po ang karera* Sir Edwin *at mabuti-buting nalilibang ang mga karerista sa mga komentaryo at* interview *nina* Andy at Bobok Domingo. *Huwag na po iyong iba nilang kasama kasi sa totoo lang si* Andy at Bobok *lang po ang talagang may alam sa karera.*

Ang siste po eh talo ka na nga, aba'y basura pa ang maririnig mong komentaryo. Kung nananalo ka naman, tiyak na mamalasin kayo susunod dahil sa palpak na coverage.

Totoo po bang caller *sa karera ng bangka sa kanal ng* Balic-Balic *itong mga pumalit sa grupo nina* Andy at Bobok?

Para pong perya ang dating nung coverage *at ito'y di ukol sa tinatamasang tagumpay ng karera sa bansa ngayon. Sinasabotahe po ba ng* Santa Ana *ang karera sa bansa?*

Hindi ko po alam kung ano ang dahilan ng pagkawala nina Andy at Bobok *pero sana po ay maibalik ang dating magandang* coverage *sa* Santa Ana.

Pabayaan na lang po sana ng Santa Ana management *kina* Jimmy Santos, Bentong, Bayani Agbayani, Palito *o* Michael V *ang pagpapatawa!*

Maraming salamat po and more power *sa inyo!*

Pete Portes
Arlegui, Manila

* * *

Next week, a *karerista* from Sta. Ana, Manila writes to defend suspended MJCI race caller J.R. "Racing" Cabansag regarding the "*Ala eh*, it's Batangas Entry" ad lib.

* * *

The newly formed Klub Don Juan de Manila is meeting again on Friday, March 15, at Myther and Friends in Malate.

Mikey Arroyo, Jun Almeda, Nano Almeda, Sonny Arevalo, George Cabreza, Jason Lim, Myther Buñag and their friends will all be there.

ONE WINNER

Edwin Villanueva

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. Grace and Fortune 2. Court General 3. Scholar Tem 4. El Campeon
Race 2—1. Ultimate Guide 2. Top Jay 3. Tawagin Mo Na
Race 3—1. Hope 2. Rose and Toy 3. Winning Prize 4. Charmingly Chit 5. Standout
Race 4—1. The Warrior 2. Regal Mischief 3. Real dancer 4. Countess Diana
Race 5—1. Viva Rosa 2. Allusion 3. Freshman 4. Star Worth
Race 6—1. Mighty Strong 2. Accurized 3. Deputy Royale 4. Tumataginting
Race 7—1. Baby Lite/Miss Anapat 2. Chief Navigator 3. Mr. Purao 4. Speed Master 5. Astuce
Race 8—1. Cool Under Fire 2. Replica 3. Bulwak 4. Renegade
Race 9—1. Marinela 2. Imperial Passion 3. Gigi's Gold
Race 10—1. The Mailman 2. Ocean Dignity/Ocean Wings 3. Strong Bird 4. C'est Magnifique
Race 11—1. Magical Mark 2. Terrific 3. Security Risk
Race 12—1. Joaqi 2. Rugged Prince 3. Magic Fingers 4. Modulo Queen 5. Ariana's Pride
Race 13—1. Front Page 2. Time Essential 3. Roulette Queen 4. Like a Prince
Race 14—1. Dazzling Doe 2. Sweep Away 3. Free Entrance 4. Beautiful Task 5. Exchange Deal 6. Beauty and Grace/Expresso

Buenavista joins HK race

EDUARDO Buenavista, the 2001 Southeast Asian Games lone Filipino double gold medalist (3,00m steeplechase and 5,000m), will see action in the the 21st Adidas King of the Road 2002 today in Hong Kong.

Buenavista won the recent Milo 10K elimination in Baguio City with a time of 32:34 and also took first place in both the 10,000m and 5,000m events in the AFP Olympics.

His most recent success in Hong Kong came at the 2000 Hong Kong Golden Mile where he finished a respectable second place.

For the third consecutive year, Asia's premier 10-kilometer race will be staged on the grounds of the Hong Kong International Airport.

All set for tablenet meet

IN ITS efforts to select the finest table tennis players in the country, the Table Tennis Association of the Philippines is hosting the first TATAP National table Tennis Selection April 15-21 at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

TATAP president Victor Valbuena said the event will serve as the final basis in selecting the national table tennis team which will undergo rigorous training in China in preparation for the Southeast Asian Games in 2003 in Vietnam.

Events on tap are men's singles, women's singles, boys' singles for 15 and under (those born on or after April 15, 1986). On top of these is the national selection proper.

Cash prizes and trophies will be awarded to the winners of the event, which promises to be one of the most prestigious after the last staging of the Rustan's National Table Tennis Championships last December.

Registration is underway. Entries may be submitted to the organizing commmittee c/o Oscar Yoshihiro Santelices or Ms Mylene Laguitan, Rm. 203, PSC Administration Bldg., Pablo Ocampo Street, Malate, Manila. For further inquiries, call up TATAP Office (tel. No. 522-1885). Last day of registration is April 8.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Paeng Nepomuceno, Paulo Valdez and Del Garcia combined for 1826 pins to snare the gold in the men's trio at the 8th President Suharto Cup International tenpin championship in Jakarta. Also today in 1990, the Philippines garnered 881 points to clinch the Pesta Sukan Merdeka golf team competition in Brunei.

BATA'S CHOICE

Billiards ace Efren "Bata" Reyes, known as "The Magician," has been chosen by McDonald's as endorser of its "Unbelievable" promo for Sundae McDip. Reyes and McDip make a great pair in a new TV commercial. Shown with Reyes during the contract signing are McDonald's managing director Joseph S. Lau (right) and vice president for marketing Leila Hernandez.

UST, FEU spikers wallop opponents

By Dennis Eroa

UAAP standouts University of Santo Tomas and Far Eastern University debuted in overpowering styles as they whipped their respective foes yesterday at the start of the much-awaited 6th Nestea Beach Volley University Championships Metro Manila eliminations at the man-made La Salle Greenhills volleyball courts.

An overflow crowd roared in approval as the Tigers and the Tamaraws drubbed Philippine Women's University, 21-10, and Fatima College, 21-8, in men's action, respectively.

Other winners in the men's division were University of Asia and Pacific, PATTS, San Beda College, Lyceum, Central Colleges of the Philippines and College of St. Benilde.

Survivors in the grueling eliminations will join their Visayas and Mindanao counterparts in the national finals slated May at Boracay with the champion men's and women's squads pocketing P100,000 each.

The country's longest running major beach volleyball event is supported by official outfitter Speedo, Astring-O-Sol Ice, Asian Spirit, the People's Airline, Mikasa, WG&A Superferry, Villa de Oro in Boracay, Boracay Gold Crown Club, Carl's Jr and Kenny Rogers Roasters.

"We truly appreciate the endeavors made by Nestea to promote beach volleyball in the country. The Philippine Sports Commission is happy and proud to endorse the tournament. It is heartening to know that a prestigious company like Nestle Philippines Inc. has made the development and promotion of sport a top priority," said PSC chair Eric Buhain.

Our Lady of Fatima College shocked La Salle-Taft, 21-16 in the women's side. Jocelyn Bunagan, a nursing student and Renee Jane Catumber played smartly to beat the duo of Charlene Mae Acdal and Izza Soriano.

CHARLENE Mae Acdal of La Salle-Taft tries in vain to save the point during yesterday's opening of the Nestea Beach Volley tilt at La Salle-Greenhills courts. The Lady Archers lost to the Fatima spikers, 21-16. JESS YUSON

Cantada Center hosts various sports clinics

SUMMER clinics for junior golf, boxing and Olympic air pistol shooting are scheduled next month and May at the Cantada Sports Center in Taguig, Metro Manila.

This was bared yesterday by Edgardo "Boy" Cantada, who constructed the center with state-of-the-art facilities to perpetuate the memories of his father Ambrosio and older brother Joe.

"Gerard Cantada, the former junior superstar, turned pro last year. He had extensive knowledge in golf instruction since he studied under noted instructors David Leadbetter and Chris Walke.

"Boxing lessons will be available to kids at the Joe Cantada Boxing Arena under the supervision of top trainers and pro boxers," Cantada said. "Again there will be 10 one-hour lessons.

"Individual lessons for adults are also available."

Those who are interested in joining these lessons may call the Cantada Sports Center at telephone 837-0795 for more information.

Therese Cantada, a veteran internationalist and national record holder, will conduct the lessons on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays next month and in May.

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REGION I: DAGUPAN * Pangasinan Main Gym, Maresville Bldg., A.B. Fernandez East. Cmdr. Loreto Velasquez – (075) 604-2205/ (0919) 394-6737 or Richard Dela Rosa – (075) 515-6279 * University of Pangasinan, Arellano St.: Lolita Franco or Conrado Morga Jr. – (0919) 348-2048 * PANGASINAN * San Carlos College, San Carlos City: Ed Bince – (0919) 720-6648 * Urdaneta Civic and Cultural Center, Urdaneta City: Jojie Manluctao – (0919) 459-4590 * Central Elementary School, Alaminos: Carlo Arafiles – (0917) 244-7528 * Narciso Ramos Sports Complex, Lingayen: Edison Manuel or Franklin Reyes – (0917) 402-3318 * Sto. Tomas Social Hall, Mangaldan: Joseph Eden * Our Lady of Manaoag, Manaoag: Jonathan Aquino – (0919) 230-3476 * St. Mary's Academy, Bayambang: Richard Vince Cruz – (0919) 817-4539 * LA UNION * La Union Taekwondo Main Gym, DMMMSU, Agoo: Dr. Antonio Calicdan – (072) 521-0727/ (0919) 817-4539 * La Union National High School, San Fernando: Abelardo Ducusin – (072) 700-1140 * Union Institute of Rosario, Rosario: Jigger Pre – (0919) 598-3054/ (0919) 200-1213 * ILOCOS SUR * University of Northern Philippines, Vigan: Regie Vic Calsada – (0917) 356-3447 or Dennis Oli – (0917) 734-1030 * Vigan Taekwondo Chapter, DWAD Gym, Vigan: Eden Liezel De Peralta – (0917) 754-0508 or Suzeth Rana – (0919) 776-2057 * Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College, Sta. Maria: Angelito Valle – (0916) 329-2851 * Ilocos Sur Polytechnic State College, Santiago: Rolando Mapalo – (0917) 477-3387 * CCC-UNP, Candon: Nelson Camero – (0917) 497-0488 * ILOCOS NORTE * Ilocos Norte Taekwondo Chapter, Marcos Stadium, Laoag City: Rogelio Valdez – (02) 546-1924/ (0919) 352-4559 * Laoag City Taekwondo Chapter, Amphitheater, Laoag City: Amante dela Cruz – (077) 732-046/ (0919) 625-9836 or Atty. Franklin Respicio – (077) 732-046/ (0917) 602-0952

REGION II: * CAGAYAN PROVINCE * Peñablanca Taekwondo Club, Camasi Gym, Peñablanca: Harold Harris Pelagio – (0916) 575-5015 * Medical Colleges of Northern Philippines, Peñablanca: Dr. Protacio Ibuna – (0917) 385-0645 * Solana Taekwondo Club, Solana: Gerardo Berbano – (0917) 762-5297 * Tuao East and West Taekwondo Club, Tuao: Ian Ulysses Buendia * Gattaran Taekwondo Club, Gattaran: Rogelio dela Cruz – (0917) 606-2262 * Alcala Taekwondo Club, Alcala: Vincenta Obbania or Juanito Ballo * TUGUEGARAO * CNHS Taekwondo Chaper, Caritan: Ernesto Guzman Jr. * San Gabriel Taekwondo Club, San Gabriel: Leonardo Obispo – (0917) 382-8803 * ISABELA PROVINCE * Taekwondo Central Gym, Isabela Sports Complex, Alibagu, Ilagan: Jaime Roblanes – (0919) 331-3106 * Ilagan Taekwondo Club, Centro Ilagan Isabela Community Center: Roman Balla – (0917) 788-6741 or Divina Casasola – (0919) 848-4980 * Cabatuan Taekwondo Club, Cabatuan: Arnel Gamata or Norman Ninobla – (0919) 280-3548 * RMVIS Taekwondo Club, Reyna Mercedes: Honorio Ganio * CAUAYAN CITY * Cauayan Taekwondo Chapter, F.L. Dy Coliseum, Centro: Erickson Macadangdang – (0919) 752-7478 * Montessori Taekwondo Club, Cauayan City: Renato Oficial * SANTIAGO CITY * Black Dragon Taekwondo Club, Santiago: Garry Albert Zarandona – (0919) 731-7067 * Northeastern College Taekwondo Club, Santiago: Julius Bangilan * Lasotte Taekwondo Club, Santiago: Ahmad Elias II * NUEVA VIZCAYA * St. Mary Taekwondo Club, Bayombong: Jose Gacayan – (0919) 954-7790 * NVGCHS Taekwondo Club, Bayombong: Isidro Manlala

CAR: BAGUIO CITY * Mabini National High School, Baguio: Cesar Bautista – (0919) 836-6108 * Fort Del Pilar Elementary School, Fort Del Pilar: Cesar Bautista – (0919) 836-6108 * Baguio YMCA Taekwondo Club, Post Office Loop, Session Road: Gilbert Balancar – 442-4766 * UP College Baguio: Joel Addawe – (0917) 508-2094 * Body Base Gym, Laperal Bldg., Session Road: Melvin Morte – (0918) 509-9233 * Maharlika Center Taekwondo Chapter – Session Road: Dan Rey Velo – (0916) 822-2509 * Baguio City National High School, San Vicente Annex, Camp 8: Dan Rey Velo – (0916) 822-2509 * Baguio City National High School-Rizal, Pacdal Circle: Dan Rey Velo – (0916) 822-2509 * St. Louis-Pacdal, Pacdal Circle: Dan Rey Velo – (0916) 822-2509 * Pines City National High School, Palma St.: Jones Calingayan – (0917) 481-5814 * Baguio City Central School, Otek St.: Jones Calingayan – (0917) 481-5814 * Doña Aurora Elementary School, Baguio: Jones Calingayan – (0917) 481-5814 * Baguio City National High School, Gov. Pack Road: Jaime Pundo – (0919) 589-0449 * Quezon Elementary School, Baguio: Jaime Pundo – (0919) 589-0449 * BENGUET PROVINCE * Benguet Taekwondo Association, Ben Palis Peace Hall, Provincial Capitol La Trinidad: Gilbert Balancar – (0917) 996-7636 * ABRA PROVINCE * Divine Word College of Bangued Gym, Bangued: Glenn Buenafe – (0917) 498-2248/ Fax. (047) 752-8003 * KALINGA PROVINCE * Bulanao Tabuk Taekwondo Club, Bulanao, Tabuk: Agustin Perez Jr.

REGION III: BULACAN * St. Mary's College of Meycauayan, MacArthur Hi-way: Moben Angeles – (0919) 645-0212 * KB Gym, Provincial Capitol, Malolos: Raul Buena – (0919) 598-1435 * Bulacan Sports, Sta. Isabel, Malolos: Raul Buena – (0919) 598-1435 * Bulacan State University, Malolos: Kim Cobre – (044) 791-7736 * Holy Spirit Academy of Malolos, Sta. Isabela, Malolos: Kim Cobre – (044) 791-7736 * ATSCC Taekwondo Gym, 24 Venus St., San Felipe Subd., Mojon, Malolos: Antonio Andaya Jr. – (0919) 793-0120/ (0917) 351-1114/ (044) 791-3816 * Guiguinto Taekwondo Club, Violeta Village, Taban, Guiguinto: Kim Cobre – (044) 791-7736 * Chaneco's Taekwondo, 14 Lico, San Rafael, Bulacan: Richard Chaneco – (0917) 788-8653 * ANGELES CITY * Pampanga Taekwondo Association, 646 Oklahama St., Villasol St., Villasol Subd., Angeles City: Mario Dagpin – (045) 321-0230/ (0919) 327-1415 * L'Altra Montessori School Inc., 120 Clark Ave. Villasol Subd.: Mario Dagpin – 322-0549 * Angeles University Foundation (AUF), McArthur Hi-Way, Angeles: Mario Dagpin – (045) 898-2663 to 65 loc.739 * Narciso School, Sta. Maria II: Mario Dagpin – (045) 322-1232/ 892-4904 * Nepo Elementary School, Gall St., Nepo Subd.: Christopher Dagpin – (045) 322-4643 * J.F. Kuzma School, 329 Mt. Arayat St., Clarkview Subd.: Leila Kuzma – (045) 322-5439 * Arceo Taekwondo Training Center, V A H A I Center, Villa Angela Subd.: Francis Arceo – (0919) 712-6324 * Holy Angel University, Sto. Rosario St.: Francis Arceo – (0919) 712-6324 * OB Montessori School, Villa Gloria: Novem Pangilinan – (045) 331-7267/ (0917) 612-3085 * Angeles City Taekwondo Association, Pulong Bulo: Carla Bayonito * PAMPANGA * San Fernando Taekwondo Gym, Blk 9, Lot 11, St. Jude Village, San Fernando: Dauphin Punzalan – (045) 963-2870/ (0917) 416-0281 * University of the Assumption, San Fernando: Dauphin Punzalan – (0917) 416-0281 * Lionel's Fitness Center, San Fernando: Dauphin Punzalan – (045) 963-0146/ (0917) 416-0281 * Montessori School of St. Nicholas, Samsonville, Dau, Mabalacat: Francis Arceo – (0919) 712-6324 * School of Infant Jesus, Dau, Mabalacat: Francis Arceo – (0919) 712-6324 * Body Shape, Dau, Mabalacat: Christopher Dagpin – (045) 332-1566 * TARLAC * Montessori School of St. Nicholas, Sto. Cristo St., Capas: Francis Arceo – (0919) 712-6324 * Don Bosco Technical School, Sto. Cristo, Tarlac City: Novem Pangilinan – (045) 982-2155/ (0917) 612-3008 * Tarlac Montessori School, San Sebastian, Tarlac City: Novem Pangilinan – (0917) 612-3085 * CABANATUAN CITY * Little Merry Hearts Montessori School, Bitas: Johann Ocampo – 463-6819 or Alex Cruz – 463-5413 * Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology, Gen. Tinio St.: Vivencio Esteban, Jr. – 600-4690 * Lilibeth Trinidad Dance Exercise, Gen. Tinio St.: Vivencio Esteban Jr. – 463-0998 * Dancelino By RAJ, Del Pilar St.: Vivencio Esteban, Jr. – 600-4690 * Cabanatuan City Din-Al Chinese School, Dicarma Ext.: Vivencio Esteban – 600-4690 * Wesleyan University, Mabini Ext.: Jesus Calderon – 600-1928 * NUEVA ECIJA * Holy Angels Montessori, Talavera: Johann Ocampo – (0919) 824-3913 * ESP Montessori Center, Talavera: Johann Ocampo – (0919) 250-3098 * ESP Montessori Center, Gen. Natividad: Johann Ocampo – (0919) 250-3098 * Guimba National High School, Guimba: Jesus Calderon – 600-1928 * Talugtog Multi-Purpose Hall, Talugtog: Jesus Calderon * BATAAN * Bataan Montessori School, Balanga City: Elvino Romero – (047) 237-5009/ (047) 237-5010 * Bread of Life Taekwondo Gym, Balanga City: Elvino Romero – (0919) 246-5328 * Limay Bataan Sports Complex, Limay: Elvino Romero – (0919) 246-5328 * ZAMBALES * Aura College, SBMA, SBI TI, Subic: Wesley Averhart –(0919) 873-0277

REGION IV: CAVITE * Body Prime Fitness Center, 3/F AVM Bldg., I. Mangubat St., Dasmariñas: Mario Frigillana – (0919) 389-7524 * De La Salle University, Dasmariñas: Ding Futalan – (0917) 487-2289/ 896-5901/ 890-0012 * Regency Taekwondo Club, Dasmariñas: Edwin Ambulo – (046) 414-0811/ (0917) 640-2721 * La Mediterraneo Taekwondo Club, Dasmariñas: Edwin Ambulo – (046) 414-0811/ (0917) 640-2721 * Mary Help of Christians Montessori, Dasmariñas: Jimmy Noriega – (046) 517-2698/ (0919) 424-4891 * Immaculate Conception Academy, Dasmariñas: Ronnie Valdez – (046) 419-1029 * Holy Child Montessori, Dasmariñas: Jayson Enriquez – (0919) 460-5482 * Blessed Mary Academy, Salitran, Dasmariñas: Reginaldo Cruz * Elite Taekwondo Center, Winward Hills Subd., Dasmariñas: Junn Abriza * Dasmariñas Taekwondo Training Center, B-17, L-15, Sta. Fe, DBB: Junn Abriza * Cavite Naval Base, Cavite City: Ronnie Valdez – (046) 419-1029 * Del Gracia Academy, Trece Martires City: Ronnie Valdez – (046) 419-1029 * Notre Dame, Trece Martires City: Ronnie Valdez – (046) 419-1029 * Silang Taekwondo Club, Silang: Edwin Ambulo – (046) 414-0811/ (0917) 640-2721 * Cavite Institute Taekwondo Club, Silang: Edwin Ambulo – (046) 414-0811/ (0917) 640-2721 * Fr. Michael Donoher Memorial School, Silang: Edwin Ambulo – (046) 414-0811/ (0917) 640-2721 * Rogationist College, Silang: Edwin Ambulo – (046) 414-0811/ (0917) 640-2721 * St. Anthony's Boys Village, Silang: Edwin Ambulo – (046) 414-0811/ (0917) 640-2721 * Jollie Kiddie Montessori, Silang: Edwin Ambulo – (046) 414-0811/ (0917) 640-2721 * Singles for Christ (Silang Chapter), Silang: Edwin Ambulo – (046) 414-0611/ (0917) 640-2721 * Dae Han Gym, Silang: Jayson Enriquez – (0919) 460-5482 * Dae Han Taekwondo Training Center, Buho, Silang: Jayson Enriquez – (0919) 460-5482 * Christian Values School, Bacoor: Edwin Ambulo – (046) 414-0611/ (0917) 640-2721 * St. Jerome Emiliani, Bacoor: Jimmy Noriega – (046) 517-2698/ (0919) 424-4891 * The Higher Ground Academy, Aldas IV, Ambog, Bacoor: Joel Abayon * Cavite School of Life, Panapaan, Bacoor: Lloyd Soledad – (046) 472-0849/ (0919) 309-7070 * University of Perpetual Help Rizal, Molino, Bacoor: Lloyd Soledad – (046) 472-0849/ (0919) 308-7070 * La Camelle School, Piscos St. Camella Homes II, Bacoor: Lloyd Soledad – (046) 472-0849/ (0919) 308-7070 * St. Vincent de Paul College, Meadowood Executive Village, Bacoor: Lloyd Soledad – (046) 472-0849/ (0919) 308-7070 * Divine Light Academy, Molino, Bacoor: Ramon Abejero – (046) 970-9004/ (0917) 963-8145 * Statefield School, Molino, Bacoor: Ramon Abejero – (046) 970-9004/ (0917) 963-8145 * Montea Gym, 133 Avenida Rizal, Phase 4, Pag-asa Imus, Cavite: Ramon Abejero – (046) 970-9004/ (0917) 963-8145 * Imus Taekwondo, Nuevo Ave., Imus: Joel Abayon * Del Pilar Academy, Gen. Sutorre St., Imus, Cavite: Joel Abayon * Gymix, Nuevo Ave., Imus: Joel Abayon – (046) 970-8737 * The Gym, 3/F, Ilano Bldg., Nuevo Ave., Imus: Joel Abayon – (046) 471-9355 * Pag-ibig Unida School, Anabu-I, Imus: Joel Abayon * St. Augustine School, Tanza: Reydante Agpawa * Mater Dei Academy, Tagaytay City: Jayson Enriquez – (0919) 460-5482 * RIZAL PROVINCE * Rizal Taekwondo Association, Montalban: Lumar Sosa – 997-0951/ (0917) 938-2869 * San Ildefonso College, Tanay: Lumar Sosa or Freddie Mar Agno – 654-1399/ 654-3270 * Infant Jesus Academy, Padilla, Antipolo City: Lumar Sosa – 639-5498 * Fitness Zone, Circumferential Road, Brgy. Dalig Antipolo City: Eric Go – 630-5154/ (0919) 654-8957 * Taytay Taekwondo Chapter, 56 E. Rodriguez Ave., Taytay: Eric Go – 284-1408/ (0916) 654-6957 * Roosevelt College, Cainta: Lumar Sosa or Anthony Evangelista – 667-0951 * LAGUNA * Shapers Gym, Grove Ave., Los Baños: Mario Frigillana – (0919) 389-7524/ (049) 536-2825 * Laguna South Gym, UP Los Baños: Jimmy Navarro – (0917) 527-8725/ (049) 530-6478 * Don Bosco Sta. Cruz: Jimmy Navarro – (0917) 527-8725 * Bodyshape San Pablo, Bonifacio Monument, Lakeview San Pablo City: Elmer Gregorio – (0919) 566-2380/ Roy Alcos – (049) 561-2239/ Eric Dionicio – (0918) 916-0178 * San Pablo City Taekwondo Club, Aquino Sports Complex, San Pablo City: Rhodora Fandiolan – 562-9231/ (0919) 628-0509 * Nagcarlan Montessori School, Nagcarlan: Rone Dimasno or Rhodora Fandiolan * Canossa Academy, Calamba: Frederick Simbulan * Colegio de San Juan de Letran, Calamba: Frederick Simbulan * Caritas Don Bosco School, Technopark, Biñan: Frederick Simbulan * CSA Biñan, Southwood, Biñan: Elmer Gregorio – (02) 894-2151/ (0916) 565-2386 * Alpha Angelicum Academy, Biñan: Jimmy Navarro – (0916) 380-8021 or Romeo Alen – (0917) 527-8725 * Jesus the Risen Savior School, Sampaguita Village, San Pedro: Frederick Simbulan * Pacita Taekwondo, 16 8th St. Circle, Phase 1-A, Pacita Complex, San Pedro: Mario Torio or Precy – 869-6488 * St. Therese of the Child Jesus School, San Pedro: Walter Matias – (0917) 402-8740 * Casa Del Niño Montessori & Science High School, Pacita II, San Pedro: Fidel Cunanan – (0919) 823-9366 * Mater Ecclesiae School, Olympia Village, San Pedro: Fidel Cunanan – (0919) 823-9388 * Canossa School, Brgy. Kanlupan, Santa Rosa: Fidel Cunanan – (0919) 823-9366 * Rex Dei Academy, Golden City, Santa Rosa: Fidel Cunanan – (0919) 823-9366 * Laguna Bel-Air School, Sta. Rosa: Frederick Simbulan * Chair of St. Peter School of Sta. Rosa: Lawrence Plata * Infant Jesus Montessori Center, Banlic, Cabuyao: Walter Matias – (0917) 402-8740 * Our Lady of Divine Grace School, Cabuyao: Walter Matias – (0917) 402-8740 * Rise and Shine Christian School, Cabuyao: Frederick Simbulan * Ann Arbor School, Carmona: Dennis Ambat or Lawrence Plata * BATANGAS * Batangas Taekwondo Main Gym, Tingga Labac, Batangas City: Naz Arica – (043) 402-3018 * Alpa Hotel, Kumintang Ibaba, Batangas City: Naz Arica – (043) 723-1026/ (043) 402-3018 * St. Bridget's College, M.H. Del Pilar St., Batangas City: Naz Arica – (043) 402-3018 * Fitness World Gym, Caedo Commercial Center, Bolbok, Batangas City: Naz Arica – (043) 402-3018 * SLP Taekwondo Gym, Shirley's Canteen Annex Bldg., 116 Rizal Ave., Batangas City: Randy Uy Macaraig – (043) 723-2788/ (0917) 201-7215 * Club Malarayat, Lipa City: Mandy Del Rosario – (0917) 840-1768 * De la Salle-Lipa, Lipa City: Mandy Del Rosario – (0917) 840-1768 * The Nazareth School, Lipa City: Mandy Del Rosario – (0917) 840-1768 * San Fernando Air Base, Lipa City: Rene Dimasano * Canossa Academy, San Carlos St., Lipa City, Batangas: Elmer Velo – (0919) 476-9264/ (043) 756-1819 * BCR Fitness Gym, Poblacion, Rosario: Elmer Velo – (043) 321-2077/ (043) 321-1023 * Our Lady of Mercy Academy (OLMA), Tayrsan: Randy Uy Macaraig – (0917) 201-7215 * QUEZON PROVINCE * Enverga University Foundation, Pelota Court Site, Lucena City: Aba Desaluna – (0919) 522-5830 * West 1 Public School, Iyam, Lucena City: Aba Desaluna – (0919) 522-5830 * Central Public School, Pablo St., Sariaya * St. Francis High School, Sariaya: Aba Desaluna – (0919) 522-5830 * Manuel L. Quezon Chinese School, De Valle St., Candelaria: Aba Desaluna – (0919) 522-5830 * PALAWAN * Legend Hotel, Malvar St., Puerto Princesa City: Ley Ordenes – (0919) 206-8315 or Eloisa Flor – 433-9517 * Narra Taekwondo, Narra: Eric Gesmundo * Brookes Point Taekwondo, 149 Edwards Ave., Brookes Point: Allen Bucsit * Culion Taekwondo, Culion: Odie Dayag * ORIENTAL MINDORO * Sal-O Taekwondo Gym, Calapan Expressway, Lumangbayan, Calapan City: Mario Frigillana – (0918) 389-7524/ (043) 288-2580/ (049) 416-2419 * AURORA PROVINCE * Aurora State College (ASCOT), Baler, Aurora: Cathy Go * San Luis Multi-Purpose Center, San Luis, Aurora: Leo Teneza * ROMBLON * Romblon Taekwondo, Romblon Province: So In Han or Dennis Corpin

REGION V: LEGASPI CITY * Multi-Purpose Bldg., PRO-5 Camp Gen. Simeon Ola: SPO2 Benjamin Custodio – (0919) 576-7175 * CAMARINES NORTE * Camarines Norte Taekwondo Assn., Purok 10, Brgy. 8 Daet: SPO1 Domingo Naing Jr. – (054) 571-2121 * NAGA CITY * Naga Parochial School: Mario Pisa – (0919) 825-4004 * St. Joseph School: Mario Pisa – (0919) 825-4004 * NCF Taekwondo Club, Naga College Foundation, Liboton St.: Noelito Tarrobago – (0919) 877-5079/ (0916) 429-3902/ 811-7525 loc. 114 * CAMARINES SUR * University of St. Anthony Forum, San Miguel, Iriga City: Efren Avestruz Jr. – (0919) 843-3175 * Pili Capital College, San Isidro, Pili: Efren Avestruz Jr. – (0919) 843-3175 * Buhi Multi-Purpose Hall, Buhi Central School, Buhi: Efren Avestruz Jr. – 0919-843-3175 * MASBATE * Masbate Taekwondo Club, Danao St., Masbate: Constantino Napase – (056) 333-2636 * Power Kick Taekwondo Club, Mobo: Arsenio Ocsing * Uson Taekwondo Club, Uson: Randy Camano

REGION VI: ILOILO CITY * Iloilo Taekwondo Association (Main Gym), J & B Bldg., Mabini St. c/o JAG Marketing: Simplicio Griño Jr. – (0919) 790-8496 or Aubrey Mongao – (0918) 603-0832/ Gemma or Ivy – 321-0807 * A. Diasnes Gym, 226-B Lopez Jaena St., Jaro: Antonio Diasnes – 320-3972/ (0917) 980-8066 * ILOILO PROVINCE * Leon Taekwondo Association, Leon National College of Agriculture: Aubrey Mongao – (0916) 530-8060 * Pototan Taekwondo Association, Colegio De La Immaculada Concepcion: Aubrey Mongao – (0916) 530-8060 * Dumangas Taekwondo Association, Dumangas Polytechnic College: Aubrey Mongao – (0916) 530-8060 * UP Visayas Taekwondo Chapter, UP Visayas Miag-ao, City Campus: Aubrey Mongao – (0916) 530-8060 * Passi City Taekwondo Association, Passi City: Aubrey Mongao – (0916) 530-8060 * Sta. Barbara Taekwondo Association, Sta. Barbara: Jun Jun Tanalgo – 522-8224 * GUIMARAS PROVINCE * Holy Rosary Academy Inc., Concordia, Nueva Valencia: Antonio Diasnes or Rose – (0917) 602-6726 * BACOLOD CITY * Group K Central Tigers – Gardenville Subd.: Jim-Jim Chua – (034) 444-1901-03/ (0917) 205-5291 * Studio A Tigers, VSB Bldg., 3/F 6th St., Lacson: Jack Geraldoy – (034) 454-9122 or Rodner Advincula – (0919) 792-9373/ (0917) 454-9122 * Colegio De San Agustin, B.S. Aquino Drive: Jim-Jim Chua – (0917) 205-5291/ Carlos Padilla – (0917) 418-9092 / Cristina Padilla – (0918) 720-1081/ (034) 434-5365 * St. Scholastica Academy, La Salle Avenue: Cristina Padilla – (0918) 720-1081 * University of St. La Salle: Ric Relon – 434-6929 / (0917) 996-0718 * Firm Body Shop, 2/F Roli's Arcade, La Salle Ave.: Ric Relon – 435-2530 or Joseph Jarder – (0917) 996-0718 * NEGROS OCCIDENTAL * Atleta Gym, Carmela Valley Homes, Talisay City: Arnel Espida – (034) 495-5135 or Jim Jim Chua – (0919) 701-2070/ (0917) 206-5291 * Dos Hermanas Multi-Purpose Center, Brgy. Dos Hermanas, Talisay City: Jack Geraldoy – (0919) 792-9373 * Kabankalan Sports & Cultural Center, Erams West, Kabangkalan City: Gaudencio Tabanao c/o Mrs. Castro – (034) 471-2622 * Ilog Multi-Purpose Center, Ilog: Gaudencio Tabanao * La Carlota DECS Sports Center, Burgos St., La Carlota City: Ramon Villanueva – (0919) 342-1878 * Hinoba-an Sports & Cultural Center, Hinoba-an: Jojemar Decena c/o Rural Bank of Hinoba-an – (100) 198-2181 * Enriquez Taekwondo Gym, Enriquez Residence, Bago City: Jose Emmanuel Enriquez c/o Mrs. Daisy Enriquez – (034) 461-0118 * Ma-ao Taekwondo Gym, Ma-ao, Bago City: Jose Enriquez c/o Mrs. Daisy Enriquez – (034) 461-0118 * Bago City Parents Taekwondo Association, Bago City: Ric Relon – 461-0778/ (0917) 996-0718 * Victorias Taekwondo Association, Victorias City: Ric Relon – 399-3442/ (0917) 996-0718 * CAPIZ PROVINCE * Roxas Capiz Taekwondo Association, 3/F Barrios Bldg., Punta Tabuc, Roxas City: Teddy Abella or Hamil Abella – (0919) 272-4588 * Stages Taekwondo, 2/F, Ysabel Bldg., Hughes St., Roxas City – (036) 621-5812 * Baia Norte Taekwondo, Baia Norte Beach Club, Baybay, Roxas City: Teddy Abella or Hamil Abella – (036) 621-2165 * St. Mary's Academy, Burgos St., Roxas City: Teddy Abella or Hamil Abella – (036) 621-1307 * Santa Maria Regina Seminarium, College Department, Cagay, Roxas City: Teddy Abella or Hamil Abella * PSPC Dayao Campus Taekwondo, Dayao, Roxas City: Teddy Abella or Hamil Abella * Panitan National High School, Panitan: Teddy Abella or Hamil Abella * AKLAN * Science Dev. National High School, Old Buswang, Kalibo: Alejandro Arca * Tigayon Taekwondo Chapter, Kalibo: Leopoldo Zonio * Aklan National College of Fisheries, New Washington: Jose Pempe Repiedad * New Washington Taekwondo Chapter, New Washington: Danny Majan or Alexander Dela Cruz * Aklan State University, Banga: Wilfredo Nicolas * Banga Taekwondo Chapter, Banga: Josil Iman or Joel Remandora * Balete Academy, Balete: Mauricio Cuatriz * Cerizo National High School, Balete: Angelo Darunday * Libacao PNP Taekwondo, Libacao: PO2 Erwin Perez * Libacao Taekwondo Chapter, Libacao: Romeo Nabales * Boracay Taekwondo Chapter, Boracay, Malay: Vincent Magpusao * Aklan National School, Altavas: Jovito Tuto Jr. * Ibajay Taekwondo Chapter, Ibajay: Arnel Gregorio

REGION VII: CEBU CITY * Club 10 Fitness Center, Rivergate Mall, Gen. Maxilom Ave.: Julius Toledo * Baseline Taekwondo Club, Baseline Recreation Center, Juana Osmena St.: Han Kyu Sang * Cebu Basic Taekwondo Club, c/o Don Carlos A. Gothong Memorial National High School: Raul Luna – (0917) 546-9248 or Rene Brojan – (0917) 322-3588 * Avenger Taekwondo Club, c/o Cebu City Sports Center: Avenger Alob Jr. – (0917) 757-9561 * ADC Taekwondo Club, Baseline Recreation Center, Juana Osmena St.: Aldie Canizares * Sacred Heart School for Girls, Juana Osmena St.: Ethel Uy – (0917) 320-4082/ 346-8105 * Cebu International School, Nasipit, Talamban: Danny Yap – (0917) 646-5591/ 345-0955 * Basak Elementary School – Basak: Mike Cabase – (0917) 546-7362 * LAPU-LAPU CITY * PAF Taekwondo Club, 223rd Airlift Wing, Benito Ebuen Air Base, Mactan: William Ylanan * MABES Taekwondo Club, Mactan Air Base Elementary School, Benito Ebuen Air Base, Mactan: Charlie delos Reyes * MANDAUE CITY * Mandaue Taekwondo Club, Mandaue Sports Complex: Lyn Balbuena – 414-9093/ (0919) 317-7574 * BOHOL PROVINCE * Divine Word College, Tagbilaran City: Avenger Alob Jr. / Fr. Caloy Jimenez/ Sullivan Grandeza * DUMAGUETE CITY * Asian Institute of Discipline and Arts, c/o Habitat Hotel, Hibbard Avenue: Joshua Kim

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ORLANDO Magic's Tracy McGrady twists in the air for a reverse slam against the Washington Wizards. McGrady pumped in a career-high 50 points as the Magic nipped the Wizards, 99-96. *AP*

NBA COMPLETE RESULTS

Philadelphia 109, Indiana 100; Boston 117, Detroit 92; Toronto 83, Miami 74; Orlando 99, Washington 96; Cleveland 115, Milwaukee 109, OT; L.A. Clippers 94, Chicago 90; Golden State 108, Houston 95; New York 85, Utah 79; Phoenix 81, Minnesota 76; Sacramento 99, Charlotte 87; Portland 82, New Jersey 73. AP

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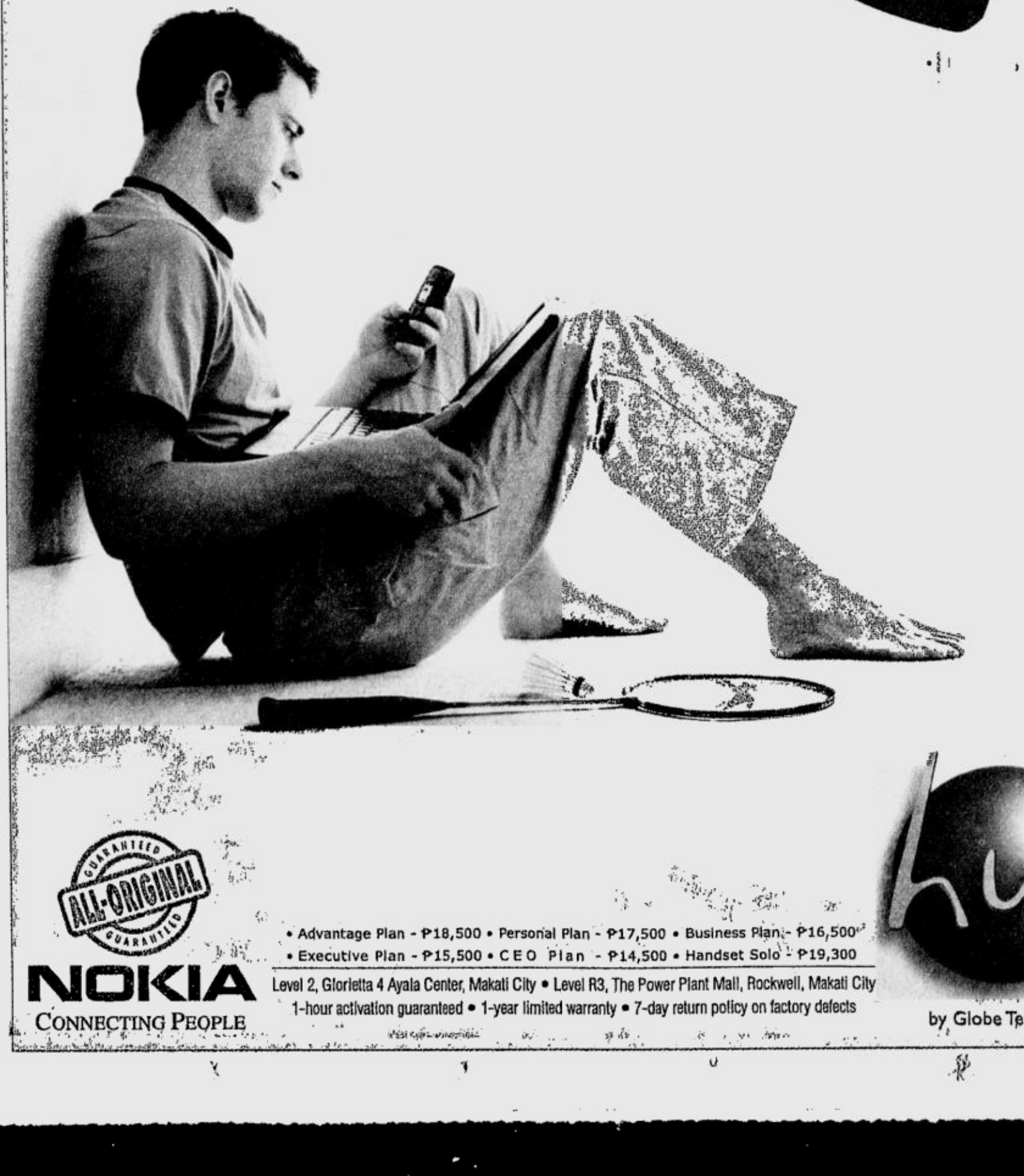

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Toronto ends long losing spell

MIAMI—The Toronto Raptors, despite playing without Vince Carter for much of the first half with foul trouble, snapped a 13-game losing streak by beating the Miami Heat, 83-74, Friday night.

The Raptors avoided moving closer to the NBA's longest losing skid this season of 15 games, set by the Houston Rockets.

Toronto, winning for the first time since Feb. 7, snapped Miami's four-game winning streak. The Heat lost for only the second time in eight games.

Antonio Davis scored 23 points for the Raptors. Carter, who played only six minutes in the first half after picking up three fouls, scored 16 points in 27 minutes.

Magic 99, Wizards 96

In Orlando, Florida, Tracy McGrady scored a career-high 50 points as Orlando snapped a four-game losing streak by defeating Washington.

McGrady, whose previous best was 49 points, broke a 96-all tie with an 8-foot leaner with 13 seconds to play.

After the Wizards' Tyronn Lue missed a potential game-tying shot, McGrady reached 50 points with a free throw with 0.8 seconds left. He had 15 points in the fourth quarter

Washington, which lost for the ninth time in 11 games, had a second chance to tie, but Chris Whitney's 3-pointer at the buzzer was short.

76ers 109, Pacers 100

In Philadelphia, Allen Iverson broke the 40-point barrier for the fourth time in five games, scoring 41 in Philadelphia's victory over Indiana.

Eric Snow added a season-high 25 for the defending Eastern Conference champion Sixers, who won for the fifth time in six outings and moved three games over .500 for the first time all season. *AP*

Seaba meet starts today

THE TRUE strength of RP-Spring Cooking Oil will be known when it battles Aspac-Texmaco of Indonesia at 4 p.m. today at the start of the Southeast Asia Basketball Association (Seaba) Champion's Cup for Men at the Cebu City Coliseum.

Led by seven-time Best Import awardee Bobby Parks, the Cooking Oil Experts are the National Open titlists and are picked to contend in the five-team, four-nation field. The Indons, shouldn't be pushovers, however, as they will be reinforced by former Pop Cola import Joe Hooks and Khalid Reeves, a former Chicago Bull.

Tong Wyne of Singapore and Petronas Malaysia collide in the second game at 5:30 p.m.

Defending champion Philippines will be fielding a second team in RP-Guardo Lhuillier, a selection of Cebu Basketball League players to be handled by Yayoy Alcoseba and ex-pro Elmer Cabahug, which is scheduled to play tomorrow.

"We have a small lineup but this is a fighting crew. We will give them a taste of the Cebuano brand of basketball. We aim for a decent finish but we are not discounting a championship appearance," said RP-Guardo Lhuillier team manager Jerry Guardo.

A simple opening ceremony will begin at 3 p.m. with Philippine Olympic Committee chairman Robert Aventajado as main speaker of the tournament sponsored by Accel, the national team outfitter, Burlington socks, Molten balls, YKL Color, Absolute Distilled Water and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO).

Other invited guests are Cebu City Mayor Tommy Osmeña, Philippine Sports Commission chairman Eric Buhain, Basketball Association of the Philippines president Quinteliano "Tiny" Literal and Cebu City Sports Commission chair Jonathan Guardo.

BAP-VP for Visayas Juan "Dodong" Aquino, Jr. is the Seaba organizing committee chairman with BAP regional director George Bragat as vice chair. *Roy Luarca*

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BASKETBALL: US NCAA - Atlantic 10 Conference Championship at 7 a.m., Big East Tournament Championship, Semifinal #1 at 11 a.m. on ESPN

NBA at 9:10 p.m. on NBN

MOTOR SPORTS: 2002 F1 Highlights, Australian Grand Prix at 9 p.m. on Star Sports

GOLF: PGA Honda Classic, Third Round at 2 p.m. (r –10 p.m.) on Star Sports

Fear and bravery in hostage drama /A26
16 arrested in 'fund-raising' cockfight /A26

METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

QC 'terror' killed with his own gun /A26
Woman slain by 2 inside Quiapo motel /A26

Moving Bonifacio monument 'not right,' says Ople

By Cynthia D. Balana

SEN. Blas Ople feels it is "not right" for Caloocan officials to even consider a proposal to relocate the Andres Bonifacio monument in their city to give way to the Metro Rail Transit.

Ople said he would ask the Senate committee on education, arts and culture to start an inquiry into the issue.

The Bonifacio monument was designed by the late National Artist Guillermo Tolentino of Malolos, Bulacan. The monument stands at the important intersection on Edsa and Rizal Avenue Extension.

But the Metro Rail Transit is threatening the monument as the transport system expands the railline in Caloocan.

According to Ople, the monument has acquired the status of a national shrine and belongs not to a single city but to the whole nation.

He vowed to introduce a measure on Monday to open an inquiry into the controversy.

Ople noted that the hearings called by Caloocan City Mayor Rey Malonzo did not meet the requirement for a national debate on this issue.

"It is the Senate that can afford full scope for a meaningful national debate," Ople said.

The senator also opposed Malonzo's idea of moving the monument to a rural site near the Tala Leprosarium.

"Malonzo thinks he can hide Bonifacio from the fields of Caloocan," Ople said in Filipino. "This is not right."

On Monday, the Senate will summon to a hearing officials of Malacañang, the Department of Education, Culture and Sports, and the National Historical Institute.

Senators will also invite Department of Transportation and Communications officials in charge of the MRT project.

On Thursday, the National Historical Institute denied Malonzo's statement that the NHI ignored the historic value of the Bonifacio monument when the NHI excluded it from the NHI publication "Historical Markers—Metropolitan Manila."

MOVING BONIFACIO/A26

BONIFACIO Monument in Caloocan City. FILE PHOTO

'Miracle worker' teaches deaf-mute kids to speak

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

TALES OF THE CITY

FOR the 150 students of the Philippine Institute for the Deaf, Julie Esguerra is something of a miracle worker.

As Jesus Christ made the blind see and the lame walk, Esguerra is making the deaf-mute speak. Yes, speak just as well as any normal person.

Esguerra's methods are far from divine. It is the result of years of study and dedication that started when she was just 2 years old.

When Julie was still that young, her mother Sergia, herself a teacher, brought many of her deaf students to their home in Sampaloc and those children became Julie's playmates.

"My mother was one of the first to teach deaf-mute children to

MIRACLE WORKER/ A26

ESGUERRA ROGER MARGALLO

Fear and bravery in hostage drama

By Anna Felizardo
Contributor

WHEN Edna Reyes woke up on the morning of Dec. 9, 2001, she had no inkling that a horrible, traumatic experience awaited her and her family.

Edna thought she and her 4-year-old daughter Rachel were safe inside their home, and the girl was right beside her, the girl's small hand in her mother's hand. Mother and daughter stood just outside the door of the room that the family rents in a house in Cupang, Antipolo.

Edna's husband Raul, a security guard, was at work in Wack Wack in Mandaluyong City. Their eight-year-old son Randy was in school.

About half past noon, it happened. A man barged in through the main door of the house, just a few steps away from Edna and her daughter. The man was about 5-foot-2, dark, in his early thirties and wore a T-shirt and shorts. From the wild look in his eyes (*"Nanlilisik ang mga mata niya"*), Edna guessed at once that he was under the influence of drugs.

Things happened so fast and Edna was stunned. The man grabbed her daughter, pulled out a kitchen knife from his pocket and ran.

Recovering from her initial shock, Edna ran after the man while screaming for help. The man clutched Rachel and at the same time was pointing the knife at the little girl's chest. To Edna's surprise, he suddenly turned back and dashed into the vacant room beside the room that Edna's family was renting. Edna tried to open the door after him, but the man had locked it from inside.

Mother and daughter were crying in terror and calling out to each other. By this time, curious neighbors had formed a big crowd outside the room where the man and Rachel were. From within the locked room, the man shouted at the crowd in Filipino: "You want me to kill this child?"

A neighbor informed Annabelle Perez, Edna's sister-in-law, of the hostage-taking. Annabelle and her husband rushed to the office of the barangay tanod, who dialed "117" for police assistance. The 117 operator forwarded the call to the Antipolo City police substation in Barangay Mayamot.

The substation commander, Major Nicasio Pedraja, ordered five of his men to accompany him on the mission: PO2 Marlito Rivera, PO2 Danilo Villaflor, PO2 Gerardo Martinez, Police Aide Pepito del Rosario, and Police Aide Junior Anclote.

Pedraja called out to the hostage-taker and asked him what he wanted. "He said a man named Bobet was chasing him and wanted to kill him," Pedraja would recount later. "He Bobet locked him up for three days and made him take shabu."

Pusher

The policemen knew the Bobet that the man was talking about, a known drug pusher in Barangay Cupang.

Pedraja asked the man what conditions he would set for the release of the girl. At first the man said he would surrender only to a policeman friend from Marikina, a Sergeant Prado. After a few minutes, the man said he would surrender only in the presence of a reporter. He also asked for a watch.

While negotiations were going on, both the child and her mother were crying and screaming. The man continued to run the point of his knife up and down the girl's body.

"My child's body and arms were

PEDRAJA

already covered with blood," Edna recalled.

One of the kibitzers who remained just outside the cordoned-off area said he knew the hostage-taker. He said the man was from Marikina and he also knew the man's wife. One of the policemen sent the kibitzer to fetch the man's wife so she could help persuade her husband to surrender.

Major Pedraja also sent someone to look for the man's policeman friend.

Dialogue

When the hostage-taker's wife arrived, Major Pedraja learned that she and the man had been quarreling over the man's drug habit.

"She said her husband was driven to do what he did after she drove him out of the house because he would not stop taking drugs," Pedraja said. "She said he had been taking drugs for five years."

Another hour passed, during which the man and his wife had an emotional dialogue. The man alternately shouted at his wife and cried. "He wanted to know why she was treating him that way, why she drove him out of the house," Pedraja said. When the child cried, the man also shouted at her.

"The child had so many slash wounds in the body," the police major added. "Every time anyone he didn't like talked to him, he would slash a part of the child's body."

The breakthrough came when the man's policeman friend from Marikina arrived. By then, almost three hours had passed. Pedraja instructed Marikina's Sergeant Prado to announce his presence to the hostage taker, request that he be allowed to enter the room and persuade the man to surrender.

They agreed that at the right moment, Prado would give Pedraja the signal to enter the room and grab the man.

The man's trust in Prado made all the difference. He let Prado into the room, locked the door again and began to unburden himself to his friend.

Within just a few minutes, Prado managed to convince the man to surrender to the police. As soon as Prado got him to throw the kitchen knife to the ground, Prado gave Pedraja the thumbs-up sign. Pedraja kicked the door open and barged into the room, his men following right behind him.

Stunned

Surprised, Gerry let go of Rachel and stood up.

"He was able to run toward the kitchen, but I jumped him and Sergeant Semacio put handcuffs on him while Sergeant Martinez helped me prevent him from escaping," Pedraja said.

As soon as they had immobilized the man, Pedraja took the terrified Rachel from one of the policemen. Pedraja carried the girl outside so she could be taken to the E. Rodriguez Hospital in Marikina for treatment of her slash wounds.

As for the man, the bloodthirsty mob pounced on him as the policemen dragged him out. "The kibitzers 'welcomed' him, kicking and punching him," Pedraja said.

Police filed three charges against the man: serious illegal detention, frustrated homicide and illegal possession of a deadly weapon.

At this writing the man was still detained in the Bureau of Jail Management prison in Antipolo City. His case is pending before Fiscal Mario Luna of Antipolo.

Edna brought her daughter to the Department of Interior and Local Government in Quezon City for the interview on which this account is based. Throughout the interview, the girl clung to her mother, an anxious look in her eyes.

Trauma

Annabel, Edna's sister-in-law, said: "She used to be talkative, but she stopped being so after what happened. Now she always plays alone. And then she suddenly breaks into tears. And she has become fearful of men, even of her uncles."

It will take some time before Rachel gets over her traumatic experience.

Edna, her husband Raul, Annabel and Major Pedraja himself consider it nothing less than a miracle that Rachel survived her many slash wounds.

"I really believe there was divine intervention," Major Pedraja said. "I'm really surprised that the child lived because the knife was so sharp and she was drenched in blood.

"If the Lord had not guided me, I would not have been able to execute the rescue properly. Someone does instruct you what to do and say," added the police major, who had handled an earlier hostage incident.

Edna cannot thank Major Pedraja and his team enough, as well as everyone else who helped save her daughter's life.

"Especially 117," she said.

QC 'terror' killed with his own gun

By Agnes E. Donato

A MAN who allegedly terrorized a Quezon City neighborhood on Friday night was shot and killed with his own gun, which he used to threaten people.

Edilberto Malinao, 31, of Sta. Lucia Village, Las Piñas City, was shot several times when he grappled with PO3 Carlos Addun, for possession of an Armalite rifle.

Addun, 35, a resident of San Roque II, Barangay Pag-asa, Quezon City, is detailed with the Traffic Management Group of the Central Police District.

Police said a Raul Nupies informed Addun that a man had been seen waving his gun and threatening people in San Roque II about 8 p.m. Friday.

Addun went out to check and found Malinao brandishing an Armalite, police said.

The policeman then asked for assistance from members of the CPD mobile force to disarm Malinao.

But while they were negotiating, the victim allegedly refused to surrender the firearm, forcing the police to wrest the gun from him.

Malinao and Addun then grappled for possession of the firearm, which went off and hit Malinao several times.

He died on the spot.

Woman slain by 2 inside Quiapo motel

AN UNIDENTIFIED woman was strangled to death by a couple inside a motel in Quiapo, Manila on Friday.

Police described the victim as between 30 and 35 years old, clad in a striped red, blue and white shirt and denim shorts.

A nylon cord was tightly looped around her neck, said SPO1 Edison Bertoldo of the city police's homicide section.

The victim checked into Room 10 of the Anison Lodging House on Malayang Street near the Quiapo Islamic Center about 1 p.m. Friday, Bertoldo said.

Motel owner Jun Daluma told the police that the victim was accompanied by a certain Jack and another woman. ***Jerome Aning***

Moving Bonifacio monument 'not . . .

From page A25

In a statement, NHI officials said Public Act No. 2760 of 1918 and Public Act No. 3602 of 1929, which authorized the erection of the Bonifacio monument, already characterized the structure as a "national monument to honor the hero's historic contribution to the birth of the nation."

The Rizal monument at the Luneta was also the subject of Public Act No. 243 of 1901, to honor the historic role of Rizal, the NHI said in a statement.

It said the Bonifacio and Rizal national monuments are not listed in the NHI book because the law has already recognized them as national monuments.

They said the NHI book on historical markers in Metro Manila is meant to include markers installed upon specific action of the NHI.

"There is absolutely no basis for Malonzo's claim that the NHI neglected the monument's historical significance," the NHI statement said.

The NHI also cited presidential decrees No. 260 and No. 1505, empowering the institute to declare sites and edifices as national historical landmarks and provide penalties for anyone who wish to change the landmark without NHI permission.

"The Bonifacio Monument is part of our national heritage as it commemorates Bonifacio and those fateful days of August 1896 when Katipuneros. . . converge(d) in the farm of Juan Ramos for the start of the Philippine Revolution," the statement said. "The Avenida Rizal was in fact extended to enable people to go to the Bonifacio Monument which, historically, was intended to be a public park."

"The NHI seeks to raise popular consciousness about the conservation of national monuments, where they were originally and historically erected, because they are important to the understanding of our history and culture," it added. "That is why NHI is ready to sit down with Mayor Malonzo to offer alternative ideas regarding developments in the Monumento area which can suitably address both the Mayor's concerns and the need to respect and preserve our National Monuments."

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, March 10, 2002
4th Sunday of Lent

1st Reading: 1 S 16:1, 6-7, 10-13

In those days Yahweh asked Samuel, "How long will you be grieving over Saul whom I have rejected as king of Israel? Fill your horn with oil and be on your way to Jesse the Bethlehemite for I have chosen my king from among his sons."

As they came, Samuel looked at Eliab the older and thought, "This must be Yahweh's anointed." But Yahweh told Samuel, "Do not judge by his looks or his stature for I have rejected him. Yahweh does not judge as man judges; humans see with the eyes; Yahweh sees the heart."

Jesse presented seven of his sons to Samuel who said, "Yahweh has chosen none of them. But are all your sons here?" Jesse replied, "There is still the youngest, tending the flock just now." Samuel said to him, "Send for him and bring him to me; we shall not sit down to eat until he arrives." So Jesse sent for his youngest son and brought him to Samuel. He was a handsome lad with ruddy complexion and beautiful eyes. And Yahweh spoke, "Go, anoint him for he is the one." Samuel then took the horn of oil and anointed him in his brothers' presence. From that day onwards, Yahweh's Spirit took hold of David.

2nd Reading: Eph 5:8-14

Brothers and sisters, you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Behave as children of light; the fruits of light are kindness, justice and truth in every form.

You yourselves search out what pleases the Lord, and take no part in works of darkness that are of no benefit; expose them instead. Indeed it is a shame even to speak of what those people do in secret, but as soon as it is exposed to the light, everything becomes clear. And what has become clear becomes light. Therefore it is said: "Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead that the light of Christ may shine on you."

Gospel: Jn 9:1-41 (or Jn 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38)

As Jesus walked along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. He made paste with spittle and clay and rubbed it on the eyes of the blind man. Then he said, "Go and wash in the Pool of Siloam." (This name means sent.) So he went and washed and came back able to see.

His neighbors and all the people who used to see him begging, wondered. They said, "Isn't this the beggar who used to sit here?" Some said, "It's the one." Others said, "No, but he looks like him." But the man himself said, "I am the one."

The people brought the man who had been blind to the Pharisees. Now it was a sabbath day when Jesus made mud paste and opened his eyes. The Pharisees asked him again, "How did you recover your sight?" And he said, "He put paste on my eyes, and I washed, and now I see." Some of the Pharisees said, "This man is not from God, for he works on the sabbath"; but others wondered, "How can a sinner perform such miraculous signs?" They were divided and they questioned the blind man again, "What do you think of this man who opened your eyes?" And he answered, "He is a prophet."

They answered him, "You were born a sinner and now you teach us!" And they expelled him.

Jesus heard that they had expelled him. He found him and said, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" He answered, "Who is he, that I may believe in him?" Jesus said, "You have seen him and he is speaking to you." He said, "Lord, I believe"; and he worshiped him.

Commentary

We're at the midway point of our 40-day desert pilgrimage in the company of Jesus. We're on the road to Jerusalem, to celebrate the mystery of death and resurrection at the heart of all creation. Jesus described it as a baptism: by water and light we'll pass with him from death to life. A blind man goes down to the pool of Siloam and from a world of darkness is reborn into light. From isolation he is reborn into community and receives the gift of faith. In the Pharisees our sinfulness is presented: when public image means more to us than truth, light isn't welcome! (Image means nothing to God—seen in the beautiful first reading.)

Merciful God, grant us enough humility to wake up, arise from the dead and let the light of Christ shine on us.

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'Miracle worker' teaches . . .

From page A25

speak rather than to use sign language for communication," Esguerra recalls. "That was in 1954. She became so good at it that the government sent her to the United States for further studies in the oral method. When she came back she experimented with the youngest children she was teaching at the School for the Deaf and Blind."

Her mother taught the method to other teachers and eventually asked her daughter to study it too.

"I guess she saw that I was the only one among her five daughters who had an inclination to teach," Esguerra says. "She enrolled me at the Philippine Normal College without my knowledge. She just gave me the class cards and told me that if I did not go to PNC, I would have to pay my own way."

Show biz

Esguerra, being an obedient daughter, went on to graduate school and earned a master's degree in special education, specializing in speech correction, at the Arellano University.

She corrected speech defects such as stuttering and lisping, improved foreign and regional accents, and also gave speech therapy to stroke victims.

As in her mother's case, teaching became Esguerra's life. She began teaching in 1972 when she was 20.

She says teaching led to an uncomplicated and fulfilling life for her.

But she gave it all up in 1977 upon the prodding of her former husband, impersonator Gary Bautista, who wanted her to work for him full time when he was active in show business from 1979-1981.

"I was his booking agent and I did all his scripts," she says. "I also introduced him to many people in show business. I even fixed his clothes and took care of him, on top of taking care of our child.

"I gave everything up for him," she adds.

The seamy side of show business became too tempting for her husband, she says. He had affairs with other women and even brought some of them home, she says.

"I was like a cigarette butt that he crushed," she says. "I felt like garbage. I was so humiliated but I did not leave him immediately. I was hoping that everything would go back to the way it was before. People called me a martyr, and I was until it eventually became too much for me to handle."

Lowest point

Her husband left her in 1981. She was pregnant and alone in taking care of six-year-old son GB.

"It was the lowest point in my life and I did not know what to do," she says. "I had no money and I had no job. My husband took all of our money. Even our house was taken away from us."

But her first love, teaching, came to her rescue.

"I went back to teaching and I was slowly able to pick up the pieces of my life," she says.

She was teaching and at the same time selling insurance policies and even AV regulators. She was even able to go to the United States to earn money, lots of it.

But she still felt empty, she says now. She finally realized that teaching was her destiny.

"I was already financially stable, I had good things because I was good in sales, but I still felt that there was something missing, so I came back," she says. "I also wanted to be with my children, whom I left with my mother in the Philippines."

Speech!

She started teaching disabled children until 1987 in her own speech clinic. In March 1987, she was finally able to teach two deaf children to speak.

"It was a miracle. I knew then that it was what I really wanted to do. The children were able to speak just three months after I started teaching them."

She started with only 18 students but when news spread of her ability to teach the deaf to speak, she was deluged by parents wanting to enroll their children in her clinic. Many of the parents encouraged her to put up a full-fledged school, and she did. It was the first non-stock, nonprofit private oral institution for the deaf in the Philippines.

"For about six months they asked me over and over again to put up an oral school for the deaf. I kept saying no because I felt that I would not be able to do it. But they were persistent, so I went on a retreat and after a series of novenas I decided to put up a nonprofit school."

Esguerra, her mother and sisters helped to make the dream a reality in 1988. She personally trained two more teachers in the first quarter and another four in the second half of the year.

Possibilities

She had an initial group of 88 children who paid to learn regular school subjects such as math, science and culture and one-on-one daily speech therapy sessions.

"The speech therapy sessions were the key to the success of the school. From the first 88 deaf students, we now have 150. We moved from our old campus to our new one in Pandacan in 1992 when former President Fidel V. Ramos donated a two-hectare property to our school."

Esguerra is excited because one of her graduates, Janice Lim, will soon finish fashion design at St. Scholastica's College, a regular school.

"Their possibilities are endless because now they can do much more than those who just use sign language," Esguerra says. "They can even become doctors and interact in the speaking world because they can speak like everybody else. They no longer have to keep to themselves."

In 1998 the National Centennial Commission for Women named Esguerra one of the "Women Who Made A Difference."

Now Esguerra dreams of eventually putting up an Asian center for oral education for the deaf.

She says the Philippines can help other countries since it is only the second country, after Japan, with an oral school for the deaf.

Esguerra says her joy when she hears deaf children speak more than makes up for the hurt caused by her husband leaving her and her children.

16 arrested in 'fund-raising' cockfight

THE COCKFIGHT was allegedly held to raise funds for the Intramuros community's patron saint. But police were not convinced and they arrested 16 people, including two barangay chairs, for holding the illegal cockfight yesterday morning.

Pedro Yabut Salvador Fuentes of Barangay 655 and 654, and 14 other people, mostly bettors, were arrested around 11 a.m. along Real Street in Intramuros by Western Police District members led by Chief Insp. Marcelino Pedrozo of the general assignments section.

The barangay chairs said the cockfight was only meant to raise funds for the feast of their patron, St. Joseph, on March 18 and 19. They said their barangay councils had approved the holding of the cockfight. ***Jerome Aning***

RMHS reunion set March 16

RAMON Magsaysay High School Manila is celebrating its 43rd founding anniversary with a grand alumni reunion on March 16, starting at 6 p.m., at the Maharlika Lounge of Casino Filipino in Parañaque.

Host is Batch '77 which is celebrating its 25th graduation anniversary.

For details, call Rachel Reyes-Sescon (928-8671 loc. 15), Lynn Chavarria Hernandez (781-4887 or 0917-795-1088 and Grace Sanchez (631-7807 or 0917-610-6599).

Called "A Blue and White Party," the dinner-dance affair will also pay tribute to the teachers of Batch '77.

The silver jubilarians are also organizing a fund-raising activity aimed to benefit the school.

Composing the Batch '77 Alumni Association executive committee are Rose Alvarez-Nuqui (chairperson), Leo Casison (vice chair for marketing), Romeo Gabaon (vice chair for operations), Danilo Victorio (vice chair for homecoming program), Grace Bayangos-Sanchez (tresurer), Sylvia Reyes-Sescon (secretary), Elizabeth Fabian-Agas, Ernesto Lim and Roberto Sheen (auditors) and Lyn Chavarria-Hernandez and Danilo Cunanan (PRO).

'ON MY HONOR'

'Legacy of a thousand virtues'

By Jerome Aning

"YOUNG people with noble ideas and impeccable character" are always welcome to the fold of the Boy Scouts of the Philippines. FILE PHOTO

"A SINGLE step could launch a great journey, while a simple act of heroism could leave a legacy of a thousand virtues."

With these words, BSP national president and Makati City mayor Jejomar Binay honored the many members of the scouting movement who lay down their lives to save others.

The selfless deeds of the scouts, dead or still living, famous or unsung, are now recounted in the book "On My Honor," which was launched in Manila last Friday.

Binay said the book is "proof that Philippine Scouting has continuously welcomed to its fold young people with noble ideas and impeccable character."

Binay, along with BSP Secretary General Carlos Escudero and other Scout officials, unveiled the 174-page book in simple rites at the BSP national office in Ermita, Manila.

Unnoticed

Binay said he came up with the idea of heroes of the scouting movement after he noted that many acts of chivalry by Filipino Boys Scouts have gone unnoticed or unappreciated.

There were also stories of scouts who were conferred with awards, which were merely filed and left to gather dust on shelves. Worse, he said, some records of Scout heroism have been lost.

The stories of scout heroes, Binay said, must be recorded and broadcasted so they can serve as models and inspiration to present and future generations.

In choosing the materials for the book, he said the BSP conducted in-depth research on the lives of each Scout and the circumstances behind every heroic act.

Saved

The eight-chapter book starts with narratives of brave young Boy Scouts who died while saving the lives of others.

There is the story of Aris Espinosa of Lanao del Norte who, in 1994, covered with his own body an exploding grenade, thus saving his children.

Sahjid Bulig succumbed to exhaustion and drowned after he saved as many lives as he could in the Pagoda tragedy in Bocaue, Bulacan in 1994.

Florencio Agapito and Robin Garcia died while they helped and led their schoolmates out of a collapsing building on the campus of the Christian Colleges of the Philippines in Cabanatuan City during the 1990 earthquake.

There are also stories of scouts who died while saving family members, relatives and townmates from drowning. There were also accounts of scouts who served as guides and volunteers and were killed in action during the Second World War.

A chapter honors the 20 scouts who perished in a plane crash while they were en route to the 1963 11th World Jamboree in Greece.

Honored

Then there are the tales of scouts who were honored for saving victims of sea tragedies, fires, crime incidents, vehicular accidents, typhoons, and even crocodile and snake attacks.

Among those who lived to tell their story is Scout Valeriano Abello, one of the most courageous.

During the Allied landings in Leyte in 1944, Abello used handkerchiefs to signal American warships, warning them of the danger on the shoreline and aiding their artillery pieces to target Japanese emplacements.

Exemplary deeds of honesty, selflessness and dedication are also mentioned in the book.

Emilio Advincula, a taxi driver who returned a bag containing thousands of US dollars in cash and P2 million in jewelry to a Filipino expatriate who lost the valuables at the airport in 1996, pointed to the good training he received from his parents and from the scouting movement.

BSP national public relations commissioner Maximo Edralin Jr. said scouting will remain the most effective companion of schools in the proper upbringing of boys and girls in the country.

Founded in 1907 by Sir Robert Baden-Powell in Dorset, England, the Boy Scout movement rapidly spread to and became popular in the United States within two years.

Gentlemen

Unknown Americans in 1910 brought scouting to the Philippines. A Philippine Council, under the Boy Scouts of America, was formed in 1923. In 1936, Congress authorized a national charter to be drawn up for the Boy Scouts of the Philippines.

Today, the BSP accounts for a nationwide membership of 2 million grouped into 102 councils.

Binay said while media tend to focus on failures, mistakes and corruption happening in our society, "very little in comparison has been chronicled regarding the unsung heroes who are making our world a better place."

"The scout heroes exemplify the breed of boys which the Movement has molded them into—young gentlemen who did not expect to take more from the world than what they gave to it," the BSP chief said.

"Maybe from these heroes, we would have a new appreciation of the beauty of life," he added. "Like them, we may also overlook the obstacles, the dangerous and adversities that come with living."

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'CIRQUE'

The circus is still in town!

By Marinel R. Cruz

WHO can say they've never been affected, astounded, amazed by circuses, in childhood and in latter parts of life? Which child, after seeing even just one circus troupe in action, can deny being moved, thrilled, and made to feel like running away from home and joining the circus?

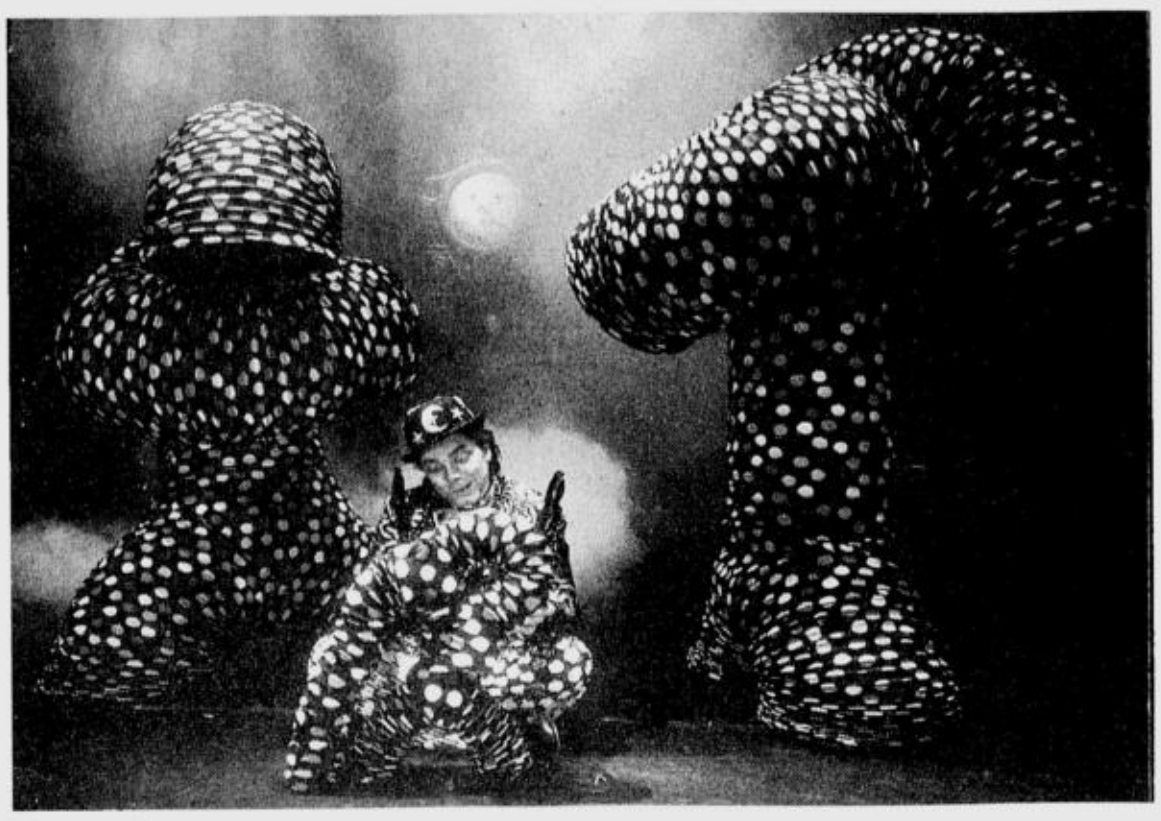
The larger-than-life aerialists, dancers, jugglers and musclemen in Neil Goldberg's "Cirque," are stirring these very same emotions among the young and old alike who watch them at the Araneta Coliseum, where the spectacle is on until March 10.

"We took Broadway theater and circus and put them together," says Heather Hoffman, the production's dance captain of three and a half years. "In Cirque you'll see a lot of theatrical elements, including the sets, props and the story line."

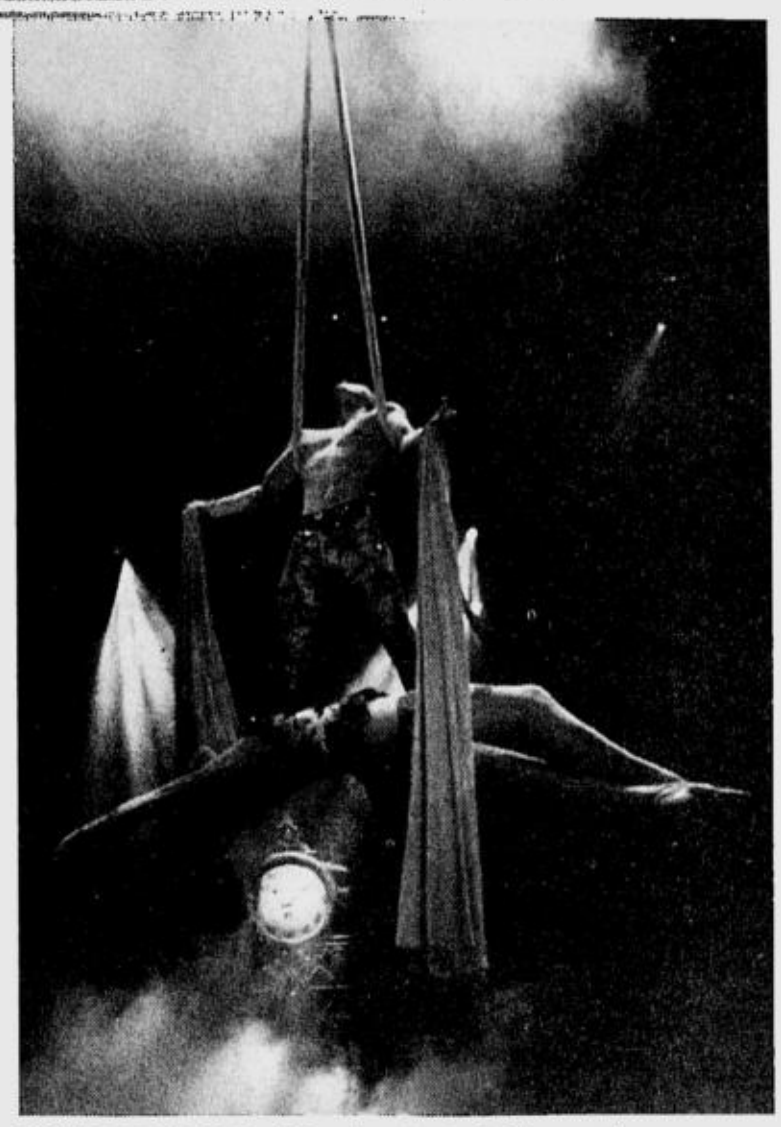
Unlike other circuses, Neil Goldberg's "Cirque" (pronounced *sirk*) tells of the inspiring adventures of the comical character named Ringabella who sleepwalks his way into a magic grandfather clock and is transported into a world of fairies, spirits and pixies.

Playing Ringabella is German performer Martin Lamberté, who describes his role as "a lost soul looking for a place to belong."

Ringabella becomes part of a dream world and leads the audience in a concert of bells. Every show, five members of the audience are picked at random and are given bells. Ringabella then conducts them in a "concert."



LAMBERTÉ as Ringabella surrounded by otherworldly characters.



FLYING COUPLE. Aerialists in a death-defying routine.

"We're not just a circus with acrobatics and jugglers," Martin says. "We bring the audience to our dream world as well."

Heather plays the conjurer. "I have magical powers but not as absolute as what the Magical Muse has," she says of her role. "Every now and then I make others miserable. I am the little pest."

Goldberg formed Cirque Productions in 1993 and set out to create a European style variety entertainment with a Broadway flair. To date, Goldberg has created and directed original productions for hundreds of events worldwide, including two Superbowls, two Miss Universe pageants and several shows for Walt Disney World Co.

"Neil has his finger in every aspect of the Cirque production—the choreography, the music, props and designs," explains Heather. "When we're in rehearsal, a lot of times, we see him create new elements as we go."

Heather says that although she's very good at what she does because of her training, she still tries to learn from Goldberg. "He has a great innate artistic ability that I aspire for because I don't have as natural a talent as he does."

Heather, whose circus experience has always been in "Cirque," began dance training at five. "I've done what all other dancers have done—cruise ships, Las Vegas, Disney World. This is a new venue for my craft."

As the dance captain, she sees to it that everybody is together when the cast does ensemble work. "I make sure everyone sticks to the choreography," she says.

Though Martin has only been with "Cirque" for four years, he has been performing for four decades. He puts up one-man shows and stage productions in Germany.

"I don't need to motivate myself because the audience motivates me," he says of his recurring role as Ringabella. He says every show is a new challenge because he believes each new audience has a different personality.

"My goal is to try to bring out the happiness and the laughter in each person during each show," he says.

Neil Goldberg's "Cirque" is on a global tour through 2003. It was in Hong Kong Feb. 5 to 17.

"This version has been touring for six months now," says Heather. "It has evolved. Adaptations have been made, with every version coming out better than the one before."

The 95-minute "Cirque" features artists from Germany, Mongolia, United States, Russia, Hungary, China and Canada. It was brought to Manila by Uniprom Inc., the leisure and entertainment arm of the Araneta Group of Companies.

Hollywood goes to war again

"BLAME" it on the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and Washington D.C., but war movies are once again the rage in Hollywood. After "Pearl Harbor," "Behind Enemy Lines" and "Black Hawk Down," now comes "We Were Soldiers," with no less than **Mel Gibson** leading the troops.

Americans are so gung-ho about defeating terrorists worldwide that they're demanding extra doses of courage, gallantry, patriotism and guts from their filmmakers, and Hollywood is only too willing to oblige. As of last count, top stars led by **Tom Cruise** and **Brad Pitt** had their own war films in pre-production, with shooting to commence this year.

Even better for us here, some of their starrers could be shot in the Philippines, boosting our visibility on the international film scene as a shooting location of choice.

On the local film scene, only last December's "Bagong Buwan" and "Yamashita" have gone to war. But, if Hollywood's war movies continue to make a mint at the tills, expect more Pinoy war movies to surface, despite the extra budget required for big battle scenes, ammunition and other war materiel, etc.

Feedback

FROM **Danny Olivares**, president of the Philippine Association of the Record Industry Inc. (Pari): "I was dumbfounded when I read your column last March 5 re: 'Pirate Me'?

"There are two accusations being leveled at the music and movie industries which we see as an offensive being floated by the pirates to put us on the defensive.

"One is what you have written about—that some record companies 'pirate' their own works, (1) to avoid paying royalties and taxes and (2) to also get a piece of the action since we cannot beat the pirates anyway.

"Paying royalties and taxes are the last of the record companies" problems when it comes to piracy. It is our survival, the whole industry's survival, that is at stake. Sales are down by 50 percent and are still going down. There may be no more royalties and taxes to talk about once the industry collapses because of piracy.

"Those who say that some record companies pirate their own works just to get some of the pirated income do not know how the recording business works.

"It is ridiculous for a producer to spend P500,000 to produce a whole album, and spend another half-million pesos to promote it, only to pirate himself and sell CDs at a ridiculous price of P20 to P35 retail. Even if he saves on taxes and make a few pesos at the pirates' ridiculously low prices.

"How can the pirates sell at P20 to P35 and still make money? They merely copy—no product research and development, no composer's and singer's advance royalty, no arranger, musical director, recording studio costs and mastering.

"In addition to the production cost, we have our manufacturing cost, advertising and promotion, distribution, administration overhead and retailers' margin. Then there are the VAT and income tax.

"The pirates merely buy our CD and copy it. Their manufacturing cost for such low-quality products may be just P15. The pirate producer, wholesaler and retailer/vendor are contented in sharing a gross profit of P5 to P20 since the pirated CDs are all on consignment, anyway. They have practically no investment. They don't pay taxes.

"I hope the alleged entertainment industry prime movers you wrote about will stop taking this way and just help us in our fight against piracy, otherwise they may end up prime movers of a dead industry."

'King of Texas'

"KING of Texas," an epic updating of **William Shakespeare**'s immortal "King Lear," will premiere at 9 p.m. on March 17 on the Hallmark Channel.

The play is recast against the turbulent backdrop of Texas in the 1840s. It stars **Patrick Stewart** as the wealthy but troubled John Lear, and **Marcia Gay Harden**, **Lauren Holly** and **Julie Cox** as his daughter, Susannah, Rebecca and Claudia.

John Lear's only legacy is his empire. But as his glory days slip away, he chooses to divide it among his daughters—but only the daughters who prove their love can share the inheritance. Susannah and Rebecca secure their future with lies, but Claudia refuses to indulge her father. For her honesty, she is banished forever.

"King of Texas" will be shown again at 9 p.m. on March 18 and 29.

Going ga-ga over Gibson in 'We Were Soldiers'

I HARDLY enjoyed Vietnam war movies. **Oliver Stone**'s "Platoon" may have won best picture and best director honors at the Oscars in 1986, but I don't remember raving about the film.

Even when Stone returned to the Philippines to film "Born on the Fourth of July," starring **Tom Cruise,** I still didn't go ga-ga over Vietnam war-dramas.

I have not seen **Michael Cimino**'s "Deer Hunter," which won the 1978 Oscars for best picture, best director and best supporting actor for **Christopher Walken**. But I hardly blinked when I saw **Stanley Kubrick**'s "Full Metal Jacket."

Lately, there has been a deluge of war films from Hollywood. I failed to watch **Ridley Scott**'s "Black Hawk Down," which my friends say is a very good war movie. But I liked **John Moore**'s "Behind Enemy Lines" and **Tony Scott**'s "Spy Game," with **Robert Redford** and **Brad Pitt.** The film even wove a moving romantic story into the plot, between Pitt and his love interest.

More war flicks are coming, including "Hart's War" with **Bruce Willis**, "Windtalkers" with **Nicolas Cage,** "Buffalo Soldiers" and the World War II love story, "Charlotte Gray" with **Cate Blanchett.**

In the production stage are "Gods and Generals," "Fertig," and the Navy warship drama, "Dreadnought."

Since I'm a huge **Mel Gibson** fan, I was in the theater last Wednesday, the first day of "We Were Soldiers," a true-to-life account of the brutal ambush of US infantrymen by the Vietcong Army in 1965.

Two friends and I caught the last full show at the Alabang Town Center but I was wide awake despite the film's length of two hours and 20 minutes.

"We Were Soldiers" opened at No. 1 in the United States a week ago, dislodging "Queen of the Damned," starring the late singer-actress **Aaliyah**.

In the war drama, Gibson plays the real-life hero **Lt. Gen. Harold G. Moore,** commander of the US 7th Cavalry 1st Battalion who led the fight against the Vietnamese troop.

The movie was based on Moore's account. He wrote the 1992 bestseller, "We Were Soldiers Once... And Young," with civilian war correspondent **Joseph Galloway**, who recounted his own first-hand experiences, complete with hair-raising photographs which he also took.

Moore and Galloway's book inspired producer-director **Randall Wallace** to recreate it on film. Wallace read the bestseller on a plane in 1994. The next day, he lost no time in tracking down the authors.

Wallace also wrote the screenplay and eventually turned the literary work into a $100-million Vietnam war epic.

According to the production information, the story happened on Nov. 14, 1965 in the Ia Drang Valley, also known as the Valley of Death, where Moore and 400 young troopers from the US Cavalry encountered 2,000 Vietcong soldiers. The battle is said to be one of the most savage in history.

The film starts out slowly, with Gibson narrating. But once the American soldiers set foot on enemy territory, the action is relentless and it will keep you on the edge of your seat.

WAR HERO. Gibson plays a real-life general in the Vietnam war.

The supporting players all turn out felt performances, including **Madeleine Stowe** who plays Gibson's wife, **Chris Klein** (of "American Pie") as a young, gallant soldier, and TV's "Felicity" star **Keri Russell** as Klein's wife.

Young actor **Barry Pepper** gives a brilliant portrayal of Galloway. You'll remember him from "The Green Mile," "Enemy of the State," "Saving Private Ryan" and "Battlefield Earth." But clearly, it is in "We Were Soldiers" that Pepper gets noticed for his acting flair.

In one of the final frames of the film, he shares a scene with Gibson and Pepper holds his own against the veteran actor.

Both of them crying and shaking after the battle, Moore tells Galloway, "I'll never forgive myself." Galloway asks, "For what?" Moore answers, "That my men died and I lived."

Greg Kinnear, who earned an Academy Award nomination for best supporting actor in "As Good as It Gets," is disappointingly reduced to a mere pilot who gets to occasionally salute his commander (Gibson). Kinnear hardly has any speaking lines and acting highlights in the entire film.

Gibson plays Moore as a tough and courageous yet devout soldier. In the bedroom, in the church and in the middle of the battlefield, Moore says a prayer.

In a brief love scene with Stowe, Gibson whispers to her, "I pray every night and I thank Him for giving you to me."

Gibson sports a crew cut and camouflage, a far cry from his long mane in such films as "Braveheart" and "The Patriot."

Perhaps one of Gibson's best lines is when he addresses the battalion before they go to war: "I can't promise you that I will bring you all home alive. But this I swear. When we go into battle, I will be the first to step on the field and I will be the last to step off. And I will leave no one behind, dead or alive. We will all come home together."

The war scenes run for more than half of the movie. There are brutal frames that will make viewers cringe.

Vietnam war-era songs were especially written for the film and recorded by artists such as **Johnny Cash** and **Dave Matthews, india.arie** and **John Ondrasik**'s Five for Fighting.

Composer **Joseph Kilna** penned a song tribute, "Sgt. McKenzie," to his great grandfather, **Charles Stuart MacKenzie**, a soldier who fought in World War I. The song is a haunting composition recorded by MacKenzie and Scottish bagpiper **Donnie MacNeil**.

The last time Gibson did a true-to-life screen portrayal was in the 1995 award-winning film, "Braveheart," where he played 13th century Scottish avenger **William Wallace**, who led his people in a revolt against the English. The film won the Oscar best picture award and Gibson the best director trophy.

I adored him in another war-drama, "The Patriot," where he was 18th century hero Benjamin Martin who led a brave rebel militia into battle against a relentless English Army.

Gibson's William Wallace in "Braveheart" may be a tough act to follow. It is still perhaps too early to say whether he will get an Academy Award nomination for "We Were Soldiers." But Lt. Gen. Harold Moore is definitely among his most memorable characterizations to date.

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2 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
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4 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5 13 GHOSTS
6 GOT 2 BELIEVE
7 ESKANDALOSA
8 A BEAUTIFUL MIND

SM CENTERPOINT
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1 GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 13 GHOST
3 WE WERE SOLDIERS
4 SHALLOW HAL
5 WE WERE SOLDIERS
6 ESKANDALOSA
7 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
8 BEAUTIFUL MIND
9 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10 GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350740

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 SHALLOW HAL
3 ALI
4 WE WERE SOLDIERS
5 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
6 GOT 2 BELIEVE
7 WE WERE SOLDIERS
8 GOT 2 BELIEVE
9 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10 ESKANDALOSA
11 13 GHOSTS
12 NOT ANOTHER TEEN

SM CITY MANILA
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1 ALI
2 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
4 WE WERE SOLDIERS
5 13 GHOSTS
6 WE WERE SOLDIERS
7 MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
8 GOT 2 BELIEVE
9 GOT 2 BELIEVE
10 SHALLOW HAL
11 ESKANDALOSA
12 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM MEGAMALL
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1 COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2 SHALLOW HAL
3 WE WERE SOLDIERS
4 WE WERE SOLDIERS
5 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
6 BEAUTIFUL MIND
7 13 GHOSTS
8 ALI
9 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10 GOT 2 BELIEVE
11 ESKANDALOSA
12 GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
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1 SHALLOW HAL
2 13 GHOSTS
3 ESKANDALOSA
4 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5 GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
7 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8 WE WERE SOLDIERS
9 CLOSED
10 CLOSED
11 CLOSED
12 CLOSED

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
3 WE WERE SOLDIERS
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 13 GHOSTS
6 SHALLOW HAL
7 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
8 WE WERE SOLDIERS
9 GOT 2 BELIEVE
10 ESKANDALOSA

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2 SHALLOW HAL
3 MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4 MARSHALL DICK
5 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6 HINOG SA PILIT
7 GOT 2 BELIEVE
8 GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1 RAT RACE
2 CLOSED
3 THE OTHERS
4 SHALLOW HAL
5 GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 RIDING IN CARS . . .
7 CLOSED
8 MARSHALL DICK

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7126015

1 SHALLOW HAL
2 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 GOT 2 BELIEVE
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 HINOG SA PILIT
6 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
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1 A BEATIFUL MIND
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 WE WERE SOLDIERS
4 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM CINEMA GUADALUPE
8820984

1 ESKANDALOSA
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 GOT 2 BELIEVE
4 ESKANDALOSA

SM CITY DAVAO
2976999

1 MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
2 COLLATERAL DAMAGE
3 SHALLOW HAL
4 HINOG SA PILIT
5 GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 RAT RACE

SM BICUTAN

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3
4

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SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

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2 (SDDS) WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 (DTS) COLLATERAL DAMAGE
4 GOLD (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
5 GOLD (DOLBY) WE WERE SOLDIERS
6 GOLD (SDDS) 13 GHOSTS
7 GOLD (DOLBY) NOT ANOTHER TEEN
8 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
9 GOT 2 BELIEVE
10 GOT 2 BELIEVE

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
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1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE
3 (DTS) BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4 ESKANDALOSA
5 RESERVE
6 (DTS) RESERVE
Golden Pearl THX RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA
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1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 ESKANDALOSA

Starmall Movies
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1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) WE WERE SOLDIERS
5 ESKANDALOSA

METROPOLIS Star
tel 850.4285

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 ESKANDALOSA
4 WE WERE SOLDIERS
5 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
6 13 GHOSTS
7 RESERVE
8 RESERVE

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) TEL. 751-2010 TO 13

1 A BEAUTIFUL MIND

Center Plaza Cinema
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1 IKAW LAMANG . . .
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE

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1 RESERVE
2 ESKANDALOSA
3 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Spring
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1 ESKANDALOSA
A BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 ESKANDALOSA
4

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.0588

1 (DOLBY) BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2
3
4 ESKANDALOSA
5 13 GHOSTS
6 GOT 2 BELIEVE
7 (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8 (SDDS) WE WERE SOLDIERS
9 (DOLBY) NOT ANOTHER TEEN

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2 ESKANDALOSA

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
3 ESKANDALOSA
4 (SDDS) BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5 GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 (DOLBY) WE WERE SOLDIERS
7 (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8 13 GHOSTS
9 ALI

Gotesco Commonwealth
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1 (DTS) WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 ESKANDALOSA
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 (SDDS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
6 WE WERE SOLDIERS
7 (DOLBY) NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
8 13 GHOSTS

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1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 ESKANDALOSA
5 (SDDS) WE WERE SOLDIERS

Universal
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1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Dilson
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1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 ESKANDALOSA

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3 RESERVE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY) BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 ESKANDALOSA

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5 RESERVE
6 RESERVE

FRC Cinema
Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 BLACK HAWK DOWN

Berma
tel 879.2029

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 ESKANDALOSA

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna) tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1 GOT 2 BELIVE
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
2 (DTS) GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DOLBY) BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DOLBY) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 (DTS) NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 SOON TO OPEN
4 SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1 GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 (DOLBY) MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4 (DTS) COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 APOY SA MAGDAMAG
3 ESKANDALOSA
4 (DTS) WE WERE SOLDIERS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
5 MOTHMAN PROPHECIES

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 A BEAUTIFUL MIND

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 GOT 2 BELIEVE

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1 13 GHOSTS
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 HALIK SA AKING LUPA

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1 ALI
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS) GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DTS) BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 KATE & LEOPOLD
3 SHALLOW HAL
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE

Jade Cinema
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1 (DOLBY EX) SHALLOW HAL
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 BATAS NG LANSANAGAN

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1 THX WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 13 GHOSTS
4 WE WERE SOLDIERS
5 BEAUTIFUL MIND
6 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
7 SHALLOW HAL
8 GOT 2 BELIEVE
9 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10 ALI

Ermita
536-7809-12

1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4 13 GHOSTS
5 BEAUTIFUL MIND
6 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
7 WE WERE SOLDIERS

Metro East - Marcos hway
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1 ALI
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
5 13 GHOSTS
6 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
7 GOT 2 BELIEVE
8 ESKANDALOSA

Novaliches
935-3229-30

1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 GOT 2 BELIEVE
4 13 GHOSTS
5 BEAUTIFUL MIND
6 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
7 ESKANDALOSA
8 ALI

Imus
471-8188 / 875-3838

1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4 BEAUTIFUL MIND
5 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6 ESKANDALOSA

Bacolod
441-0453 / 0459

1 KATE & LEOPOLD
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 THE OTHERS
4 RIDING IN CARS
5 FROM HELL
6 IKAW LAMANG . . .

Iloilo
336-8077-78

1 THE OTHERS
2 SHALLOW HAL
3 MARSHALL DICK
4 RIDING IN CARS
5 GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 RAT RACE

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp.
875-1927

1 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 SHALLOW HAL
4 SHALLOW HAL
5 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

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'Absolutely Pops' at Waterfront Cebu

HOLIDAY Entertainment and Music Corporation present Concert Queen Pops Fernandez in "Absolutely Pops," March 15 at the Grand Ballroom of Waterfront Cebu City Hotel.

Guests are concert comedy queen Ai-Ai de las Alas, with hunks Troy Montero and Piolo Pascual.

"Absolutely Pops" is co-presented by Smart Communications, with Shell Velocity, Cebu Pacific, Caltex Delo and SM City.

On March 16, Pops will be at The Venue in Davao for the celebration of "Araw ng Dabaw."

She will be joined in the concert by Montero and Pascual, with RJ Rosales.

Storytelling session at Enchanted Kingdom

ARA MINA

ACTRESS Ara Mina is featured celebrity storyteller in Enchanted Kingdom's regular storytelling session at 4:30 p.m. today at the park's Discovery Zone.

With the servant kids from the Blessed Sacrament Parish of Pasay City, Ara will share Luis Gatmaitan's heartwarming story, "Ang Pambihirang Buhok ni Raquel."

EK's celebrity storytelling feature is more than just a venue for kids to meet and listen to their favorite celebrity.

The session likewise aims to encourage kids to read and love books, teach them moral values and familiarize them with the country's talented authors of children's tales.

Regular park guests are welcome to attend.

For inquiries on park schedule and ongoing promotions, call 830-2111 to 16 (Makati) or 843-6073 to 78 (Laguna).

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	ALI
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	13 GHOSTS
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	ESKANDALOSA
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ODEON-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ROBEN	ESKANDALOSA
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE / AMERICAN PIE 2

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
B	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
C	ISKANDALOSA

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-2	EIGA SAI FILM FESTIVAL

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
CINEMA-2	ESKANDALOSA
CINEMA-3	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	ALI
CINEMA-6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-7	HINOG SA PILIT
CINEMA-8	SHALLOW HAL
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
CINEMA-12	13 GHOSTS
CINEMA-14	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-15	BATAS NG LANSANGAN

LORES

CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED

POWER PLANT CINEMA

CINEMA-1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-2	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-4	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
CINEMA-5	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-6	A BEAUTIFUL MIND

UNIWIDE METROMALL

(LAS PIÑAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

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1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN	1 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE	4 SALSA	1 AMORES PERROS (Exclusive Screening)	1 WE WERE SOLDIERS (THX)
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS	2 ALI	5 SHALLOW HAL	2 WE WERE SOLDIERS	2 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 A BEAUTIFUL MIND	3 A BEAUTIFUL MIND (THX) GUARANTEED SEATS	6 WE WERE SOLDIERS	3 A BEAUTIFUL MIND	3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE		7 13 GHOSTS	4 ILLUSIONE (Onstage) MARCH 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16	4 GOT 2 BELIEVE
				5 WE WERE SOLDIERS

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

The Ayala Malls Creens

MAKATI | ALABANG | CEBU

THE MURRAY RAINE PUPPET SHOW

MAKATI
March 22, 23 & 24 - 4:30pm, 5:30pm & 6:30pm
At the Glorietta 4 Park.
For inquiries, call 813-3396.

ALABANG
March 15, 16 &17 - 11:00am, 3:30pm, & 6:30pm
At the Activity Center.
For inquiries, call 842-2782.

10-to-10 Mallwide Sale - March 15, 16 & 17

CEBU
March 8 - 5:30pm, 6:30pm, & 7:30pm
March 9 - 3:30pm, 5:30pm, & 6:30pm
March 10 - 11am, 4pm, & 6pm
At the Activity Center.
For inquiries, call 213-5142 loc. 0.

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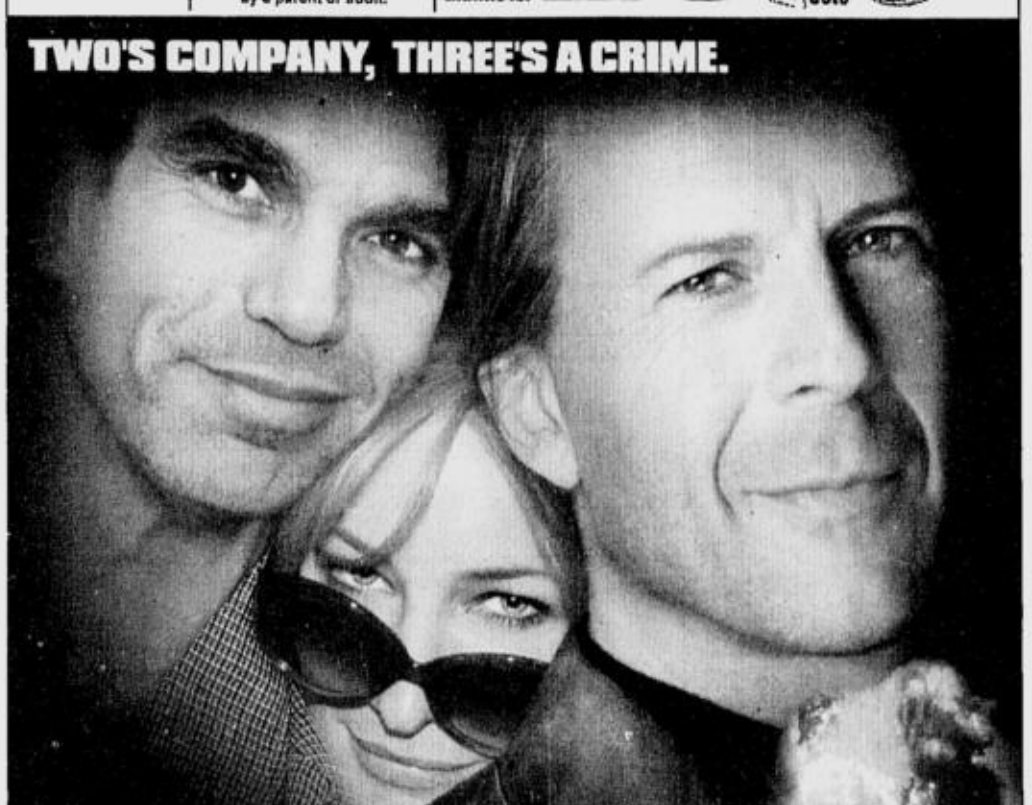
TWO'S COMPANY, THREE'S A CRIME.



BRUCE WILLIS
BILLY BOB THORNTON
CATE BLANCHETT
BANDITS

OPENS MARCH 20

On Wednesday, dive beneath the surface.

Academy Award-winners
KEVIN SPACEY and JUDI DENCH
Academy Award-nominees
JULIANNE MOORE and CATE BLANCHETT

SKYFILMS

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PINIPILAHAN...PINAG-UUSAPANI

"Superb cinematography..." -Ricky Lo (Philippine Star)

"Hindi bastos ang dating..." -Julie Fe Navarro (People's Tonight)

"Barbara Milano, SCANDAL QUEEN..." -Ronald Constantino (Tempo)

"Sobrang init ng Eskandalosa..." -Dondon Sermino (Abante)

"A movie that you ust see in theaters!" -Ed De Leon (Talibe)

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"THE FILM OF THE YEAR."

"★★★★

This masterful comedy belongs to Gene Hackman, who gives one of the most remarkable performances of his career."

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MTRCB PG-13

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND EX

GOT 2 BELIEVE - GP 10:40, 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45	A BEAUTIFUL MIND - P13 1:05, 3:50, 6:45, 9:35	WE WERE SOLDIERS - P 13 11:00, 1:40, 4:25, 7:10, 10:00
NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE - R 18 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	WE WERE SOLDIERS - P 13 12:40, 3:25, 6:10, 9:00	A BEAUTIFUL MIND - P13 11:00, 1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:20

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri., 11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Veterans in Oscar song contest

LOS ANGELES—Pop stars can turn to the Oscars when they want something besides Grammys on their trophy shelves.

The competition among Sting, Randy Newman, Paul McCartney and Enya in this year's best movie song category highlights the parallel careers some celebrity musicians are developing in film music. (The other nominee is songwriter Diane Warren, whose song "There You'll Be" from "Pearl Harbor" was performed by country singer Faith Hill.)

"In your wildest dreams you could say, 'Well, one day I'll get nominated for a Grammy.' But an Oscar seems like kind of a long shot," said Sting, nominated for the song "Until" from the romantic comedy, "Kate and Leopold."

Sting has collected some of his soundtrack songs on a compilation album, "Sting at the Movies," and was nominated for his first Oscar last year for "My Funny Friend and Me" from the Disney cartoon "The Emperor's New Groove."

In the notoriously fickle music industry, experts say performing on a soundtrack can give veteran stars unique opportunities to showcase their music to a new audience. The exposure is magnified even more by a coveted Oscar nomination.

Oscar wins by Phil Collins and Elton John for songs they performed in the Disney cartoons "Tarzan" (1999) and "The Lion King" (1994), respectively, gave a shot of energy to their lagging musical careers.

And Randy Newman, who had hit singles in the 1970s and '80s with "Short People" and "I Love L.A.," is now better known for his movie music than solo recordings.

All three of Newman's Grammys are for film music, and this year he's in the Oscar category for best song with "If I Didn't Have You" from "Monsters, Inc." His score for the animated feature has another nomination.

Newman has never received an Oscar, however, and unless he gets one this year he'll set a new Oscar record—for the most losses.

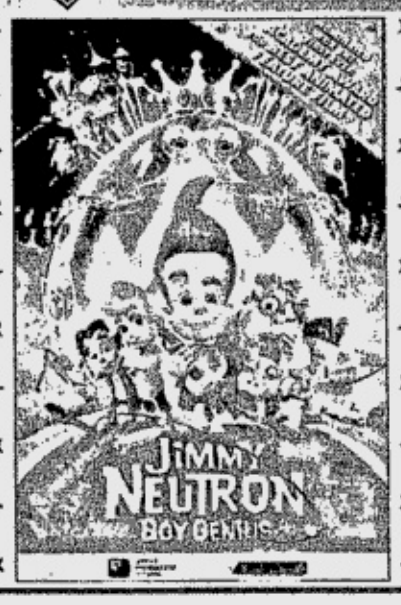
If Newman loses in both categories, he'll be 0-for-16. The record is 15 losses, held by the late art director Roland Anderson ("Breakfast at Tiffany's") and the late composer Alex North ("Cleopatra," "Spartacus").

Some songwriters savor the challenge of writing music as a companion for a specific story.

"With an album, it's sort of a blank canvas, you can write anything you imagine," said Enya, nominated for "May It Be" from "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring." "But on a film, you have to be influenced by what you're seeing on the screen. It's just something I've always enjoyed."

The Irish singer flew to New Zealand to see parts of the unfinished film for inspiration. She and her co-writers, Nicky and Roma Ryan, found they could work the epic journey of the sword-and-sorcery tale into an ethereal melody with lyrics written in the film's fictional "Quenya" dialect of the Elves. **AP**

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD SPECIAL ADVANCE SCREENING



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CINEMA 2 WE WERE SOLDIERS 11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00 R 18

Matinee: P80.00 - Screenings before 5:00pm, Monday thru Friday (Free Seating).
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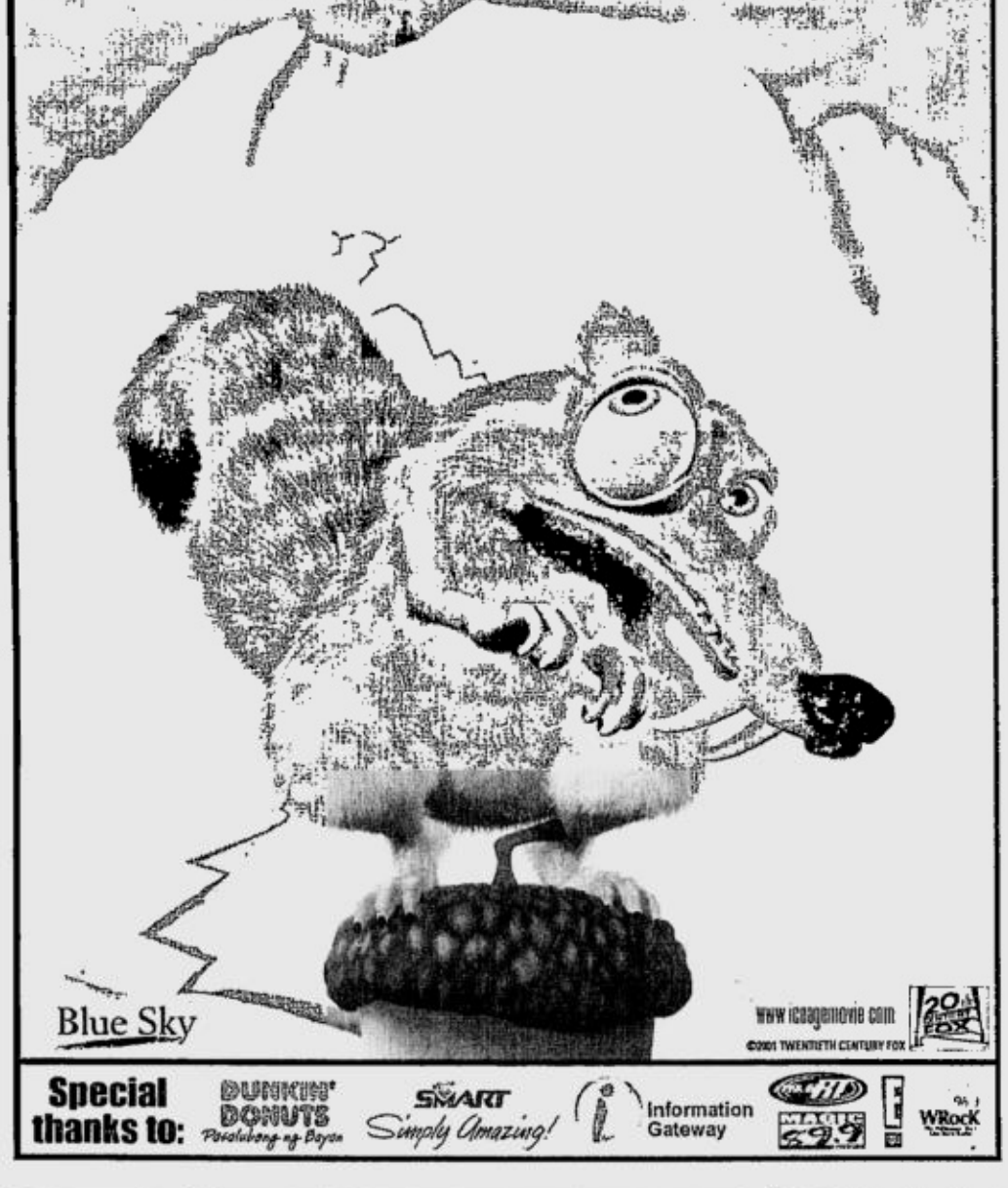

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-- Michael Wilmington
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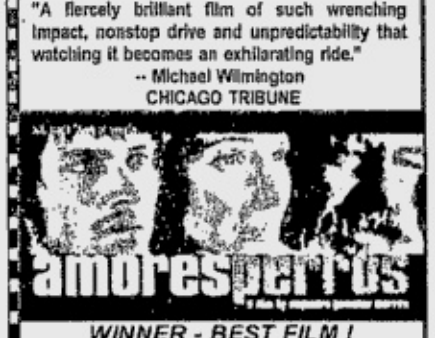

WINNER - BEST FILM !
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A boldly conceived and intricately plotted drama of love, loss, retribution and redemption, *AMORES PERROS* has already been hailed by the NEW YORK TIMES as "the first classic of the new decade." Ever since its acclaimed and award-winning world premiere at Cannes, this directorial debut by Alejandro González Iñárritu has made a sensation on the international film festival circuit, where it has been praised as a film of outstanding power, originality, and raw beauty. It has also won a stunning array of prizes from both juries and audiences alike, proclaiming not only its impressive artistic achievements, but also its undeniable and visceral power to excite people in new and unexpected ways.

AMORES PERROS raises provocative questions about the human condition at the same time that the film daringly recapitulates and reinvents different styles of Latin cinema. The result is a vivid and intricate mosaic of classic themes rendered in original -- and unforgettable ways.

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R)
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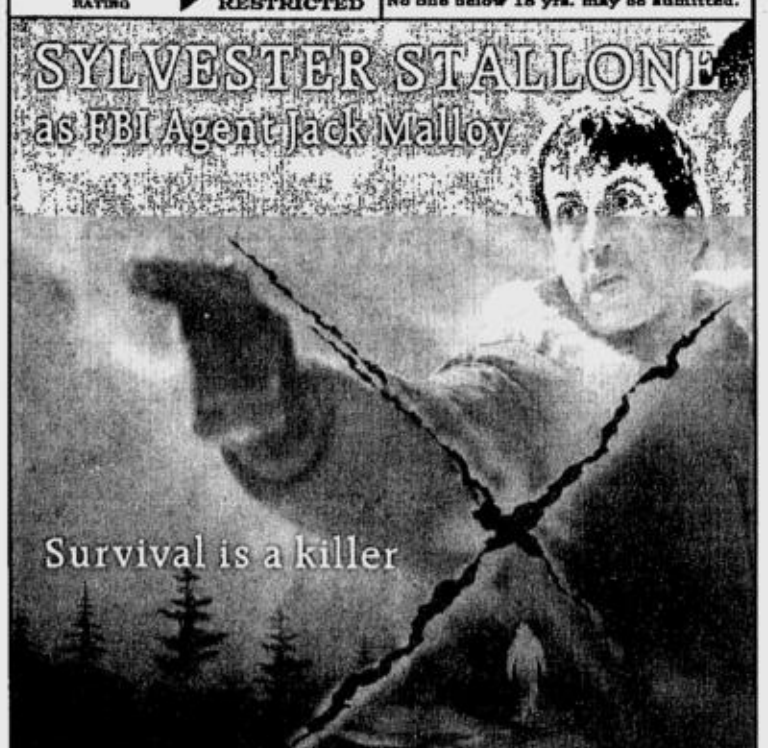

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In Tracking a Killer
Everyone is a Suspect!
OPENS MARCH 13

VAMPIRES OF THE WORLD UNITE ON MARCH 13 !
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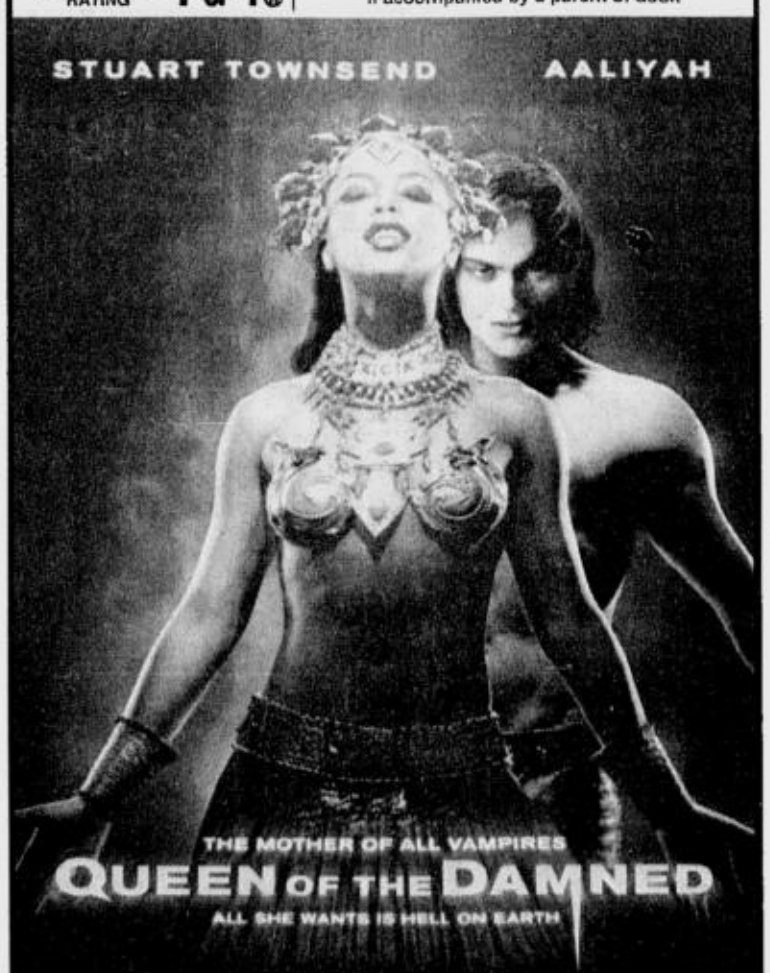

OPENS MARCH 20 !!!
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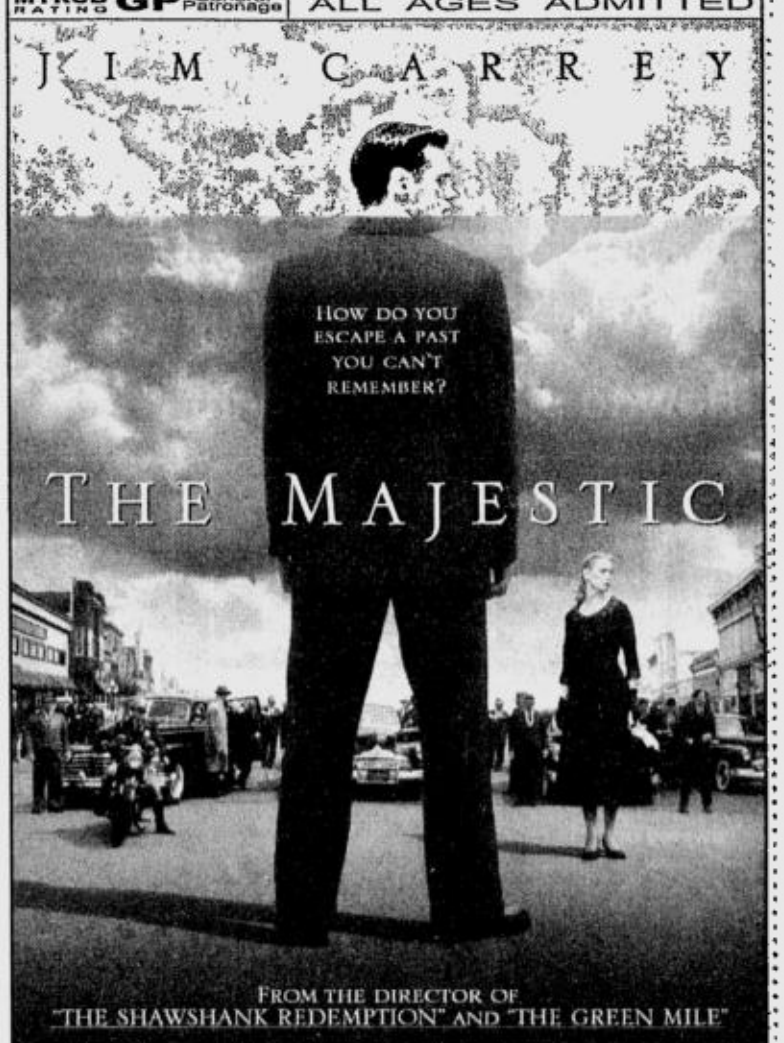

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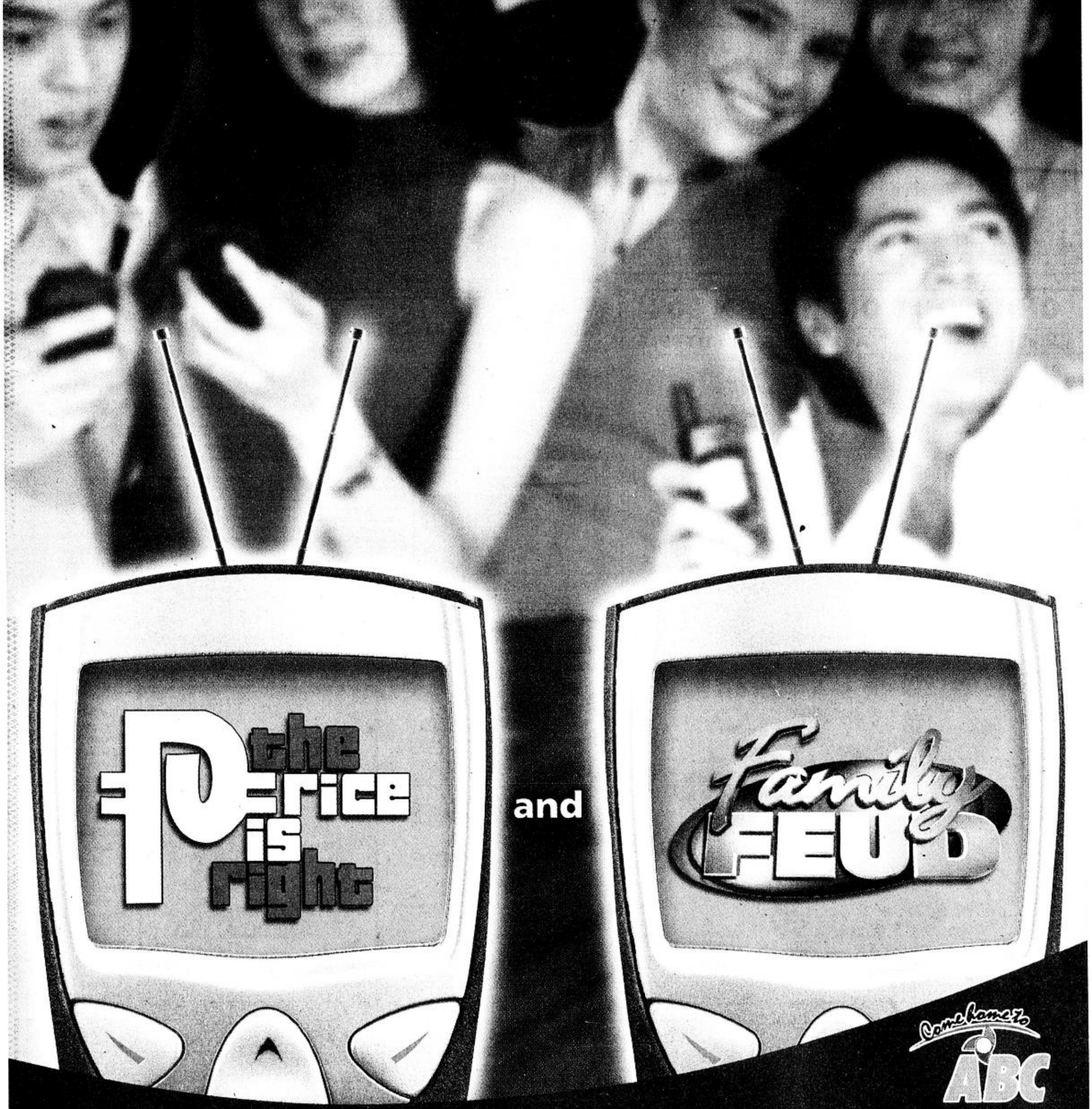

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How to play Price Is Right

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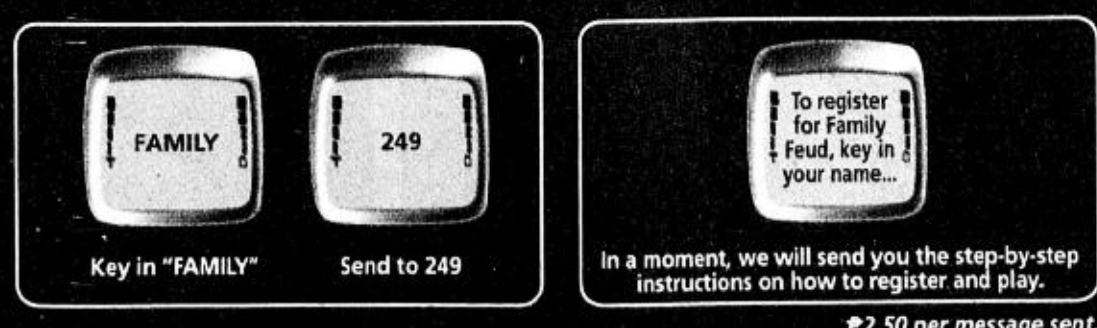
How to play Family Feud



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday BIZ

Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espina

This CEO used to sell ham in Quiapo

CUISIA: Sitting at the helm of the country's largest insurance firm

His career went on a continuous climb almost from the moment he graduated

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

PHILAMLIFE president Jose L. Cuisia stands out in a crowd because of his blond hair and very fair skin. His features come from a mother who is part German and a father who is part Spanish.

He admits he got teased in school, called "*anak araw*" or GI Joe but the teasing never bothered him.

He was almost into all kinds of sports, "you name it I was in it."

He played basketball and was in the high school team, and later joined the college intramurals. He played soccer and was part of the track and field team. On top of all that, he was editor in chief of the Green and White, the college yearbook, and the ROTC corps commander.

Getting teased for his looks never really bothered Cuisia for he went on an upward career path from the moment he stepped out of college.

Most know him as a banker and finance person, but few, if any, know that he used to man the cash registry of his grandmother's ham factory, called Cuisia Ham.

The former central bank governor, worked in the shop in Echague on Quiapo, which was also right across a competitor, Majestic Ham. He punched in the sales during his summer and Christmas vacations.

The Cuisia Ham factory was right behind his family's house in Agno and if there was one thing not lacking in the Cuisia household, it was food.

Aside from ham, he enjoyed the food brought home by his father who worked for San Miguel Corp. for 34 years including a stint as manager of the Magnolia plant then in Echague and manager of the Coke plant in Iloilo.

FIRST JOB

His mother was a homemaker who cooked well and sold some baked goodies.

But Cuisia had sufficient exercise because he walked to school every day and was very active in sports.

He studied in La Salle, from elementary to college—a true Green Archer—together with his best friend, former Finance Secretary Ramon del Rosario Jr.

Cuisia can't recall how much his lola paid him nor what he bought with the money. He is almost sure everything went into the bank as "I am very thrifty." His bank then was the Bank of the Philippine Islands.

In his last year at De La Salle University, where he was studying Liacom, he became a Citibank trainee in his senior year.

He was placed in the foreign department and was in charge with opening letters of credits and processing L/C applications. He was given an allowance of about P200 to P250 a month.

He reiterates that he was not "*gastador* and was always saving money," so when he graduated college he already had a few thousand pesos stashed in his bank account. Armed with a double degree, and a magna cum laude distinction, Cuisia did not have to apply for work. Work came to him.

Procter & Gamble, which traditionally recruits top graduates, got him as a management trainee. That was in 1967and he was placed in the finance department.

"Under the finance department, I spent

THIS/B2

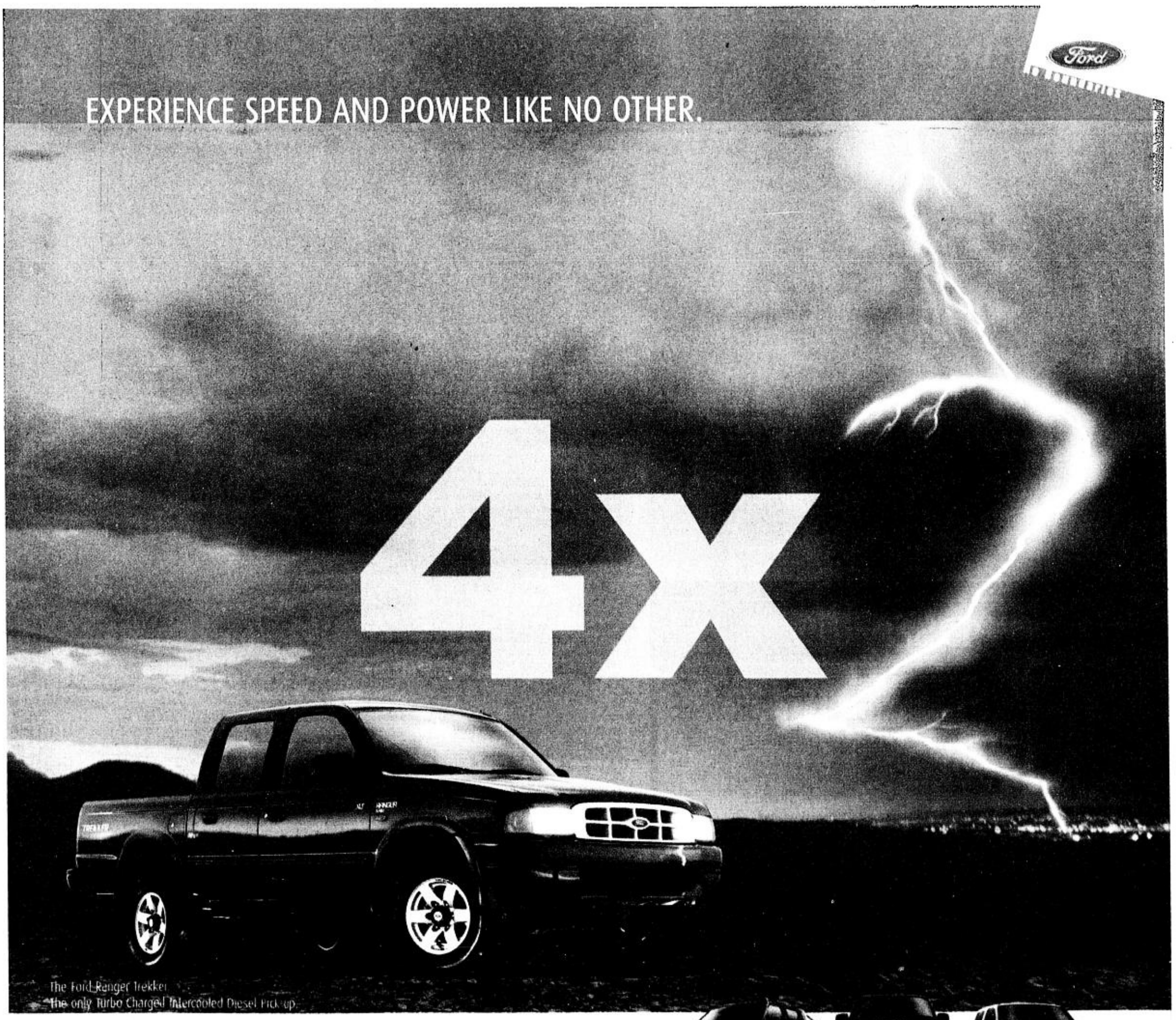
FLASHBACK

THE DECADE was the '60s. At that time, the Magnolia ice cream plant was in Echague. La Salle was full of students who lived only in the neighboring areas of Taft Avenue. Minimum wage was P150, The Beatles was the most popular band and teeners sported the Beatles haircut.

La Sallians hung out at Archer's Nook along Estrada Street.

By 1972, Cuisia was getting P30,000 a month. In the mid–70s, brand new cars cost about P40,000.

CUISIA in an interview with then journalist and current Sen. Loren Legarda.



IN YOUR FACE

BY L.P. LEVISTE

IT IS with a heavy heart that San Miguel employees bid farewell to their president of 15 years, Francisco C. Eizmendi, who retired last week. He will stay on as consultant to SMC chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. After that, he says he wants to spend more time with his family. Adios, Señor Eizmendi. Hasta la vista.

TO HONOR its "Builder" awardees, Margie Ongkeko and the Phoenix south branch, Manulife Phils., held an unusual method of reward—oil painting session where top producers painted their own trophies. Shown unveiling their "masterpieces" during the Honor Day held at the Wack Wack Golf & Country Club were from left: (front) Margie Ongkeko, Mitchie Zapanta, Melanie Lago, Ching Leonardo and Linda Buenafe. At the back from left are Robert Ong Uy, John Chua, Eugene Arnade, Deedee Osia, Cathy Yu, Renato Vergel de Dios, president and CEO, Manulife Philippines and Rommel de la Rosa.

Don't just survive, go and dominate

"The Agenda"
By Michael Hammer
Crown Business, 2001

By Dante M. Velasco

AFTER reading this new book of Michael Hammer, author of the famous "Reengineering the Corporation"—I recall this announcement rendered into a poetic line by Matthew Arnold in his famous poem Dover Beach: "The world is different now," a lament that the old world of sure cures and "balm for pain" was passing, and his generation must, therefore, be "true to one another."

What Matthew Arnold did in his generation, after a traumatic and bruising world war—and seeing a new world emerging—is what Hammer is telling executives that the entire business world has also changed dramatically—and the old bag of tricks no longer suffice.

He thus issues a call to consider new formulas for "dominating," not surviving, the market—principal of which is to trust one another (addressed to suppliers and other partners) as collaborators for success.

The author of "reengineering"—that has now become a buzzword even among those who barely knows its implications—is now saying that reengineering is not a cure-all after all.

His new book, "The Agenda," is his way of making up for the unintended effect when people viewed reengineering as a simple recipe for success.

"While I did not claim that reengineering was all that companies needed to do to defeat their competitors, the success of the concept led some to see it as panacea, which in turn encouraged others to promote their favorite silver bullets" (the surefire weapon of the Lone Ranger).

"Perhaps," he says, "part of my atonement for this unintentional transgression has been to write "The Agenda."

As it turned out, "The Agenda," is an eye-opener. To those of us who approach running business as a chancy game, Hammer—noting the fall of many famous firms (and he had no inkling yet about the collapse of giant Enron)—gives us a reality check: "Get serious about business again."

His argument is forceful—and breathless: "If managing were simple, why do even companies that become successful stay that way for such short periods of time? Why did Pan Am go out of business, why is Xerox near bankruptcy, why did Digital Equipment fall victim to acquisition? Why have such former industry titans as Lucent and General Motors, Levi Strauss and Rubbermaid, become mere shadows of their former selves?"

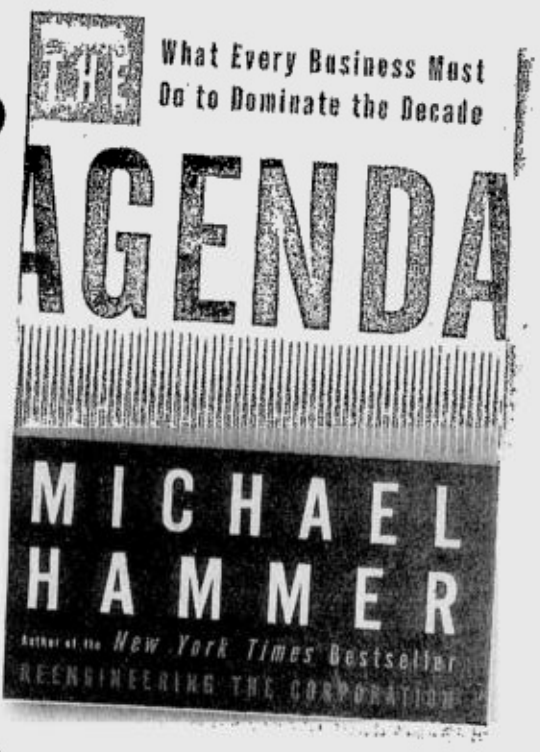
EXECUTIVE READ

Hammer thus proceeds to bring back the basics—and then astonish us with whole new insights.

The next chapter, "Run Your Business for Your Customers," seems old hat at first until Hammer discusses his six-letter formula: ETDBW, meaning, "easy-to-do-business-with."

And then he exposes companies who have succeeded in making it most difficult for customers to deal with—throwing every obstacle and every bureaucratic scheme to leave the customer bothered, bewildered and frustrated.

The author goes on advising us to give MVA—yes, more value added—to our customers. Is this now? It is now in this sense: "You give the customer more, perhaps much more, than you ever have before."



"Take the viewpoint of the customer" is an advice that isn't also new. But this story dramatizes it. He quoted a chairman who shocked his shareholders in a company that controls 90 percent of the drill market:

"I have some bad news for you. Nobody wants our drills (!) What they want is holes," he says.

What Michael Hammer achieves is to make sound business fundamentals more pronounced, more insightful and—more urgent.

For example, he stresses the need to put processes first. He rues the fact that many companies are not really inclined to perfect a process to satisfy a customer. His definition drives the point home: "Process is an organized group of related activities that together create a result of value to customers."

His chapter on "Create Order Where Chaos Reigns" first acknowledges that chaos indeed is in even the best organizations. Then, he says, "product champions" emerge as heroes in these companies to get a product produced and sold.

And then he concludes that a company cannot long survive relying on champions who use wizardry and persuasion to get things done.

DON'T/ B3

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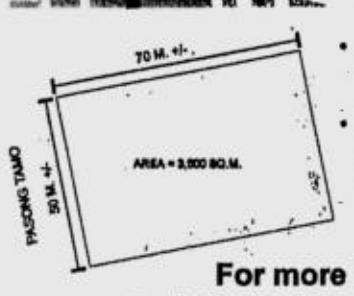

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This CEO used to sell ham in Quiapo

From page B1

most of my time doing cost accounting in Tondo," he recalls.

Cost accounting refers to the allocation of cost inputs in a product—manufacturing, research and development, advertising.

At a time when the minimum wage was about P150, Cuisia was earning P450 a month.

Not surprisingly, his first paycheck went to the bank.

His direct boss was Jesus Santiago, who used to head Pantranco but the man who was in charge of finance and the highest Filipino in P&G was Renato Paras, who became a director of the Philippine National Bank when Cuisia was central bank head and later became a member of the Monetary Board.

Cuisia stayed only 15 months as he got a tuition scholarship at The Wharton School, in the University of Pennsylvania. He also got a Fulbright travel grant. This left his dad paying for only the board and lodging.

He found out later that tuition scholarships were not given to freshmen and to this day he does not know how he was able to get one.

He shared an apartment with a Filipino and paid $175 a month

He went into Wharton in 1968. The summer of the following year he worked with the Anscor group in San Francisco for $400 a month.

The other Filipinos in Wharton during his time include Ed Grau, Jesus Villa, the late George Uy-Tioco, Rene Buhain and Jesus Sta. Maria.

He graduated from Wharton with a grade point average of 3.25, out of the highest possible of 4.00

His stint in Wharton set Cuisia's mind that he wanted to pursue a career in investment banking. After graduate school, he landed a job at Arthur Young and Co., one of the US' largest accounting firm, as a staff auditor.

"I wanted to go into investment banking but because of the recession there was not much business," Cuisia says.

His pay was $18,000 a year. After 18 months, Cuisia decided to come home. That was December 1971. In February 1972 he joined the Ayala Investment and Development Corp.

He wanted to do deals and the first one he did was the Shoemart store in Makati. Taipan Henry Sy then was looking for a loan to put up the building and Cuisia got the Ayala Insurance Co. to give a loan.

He was earning P30,000 a month which even Cuisia admits was "good pay."

But instead of playing the bachelor's life, he saved his money and invested in Ayala Corp. shares which paid off handsomely in a few years.

He got married in 1973. He met his wife in New York.

In 1977, he bought a 1,000-square-meter lot in Ayala Alabang for about P160,000 which he paid off on installment in two to three years.

He says that has been his most profitable acquisition.

Cuisia left AIDC in 1979 and became the EVP and COO of Filinvest Credit for five months. Owned by taipan Andrew Gotianun, he was soon moved to IBAA, a commercial bank.

He became the youngest bank president in 1982. He was only 38. After a few years, IBAA closed and later on merged with PCIBank. (now Equitable-PCIBank).

For a few months, Cuisia worked as a financial consultant but in March 1986, then President Corazon Aquino asked him to head SSS.

In 1990, he was made central bank governor.

And in 1993, the American Insurance Group recruited him to be the president and chief executive officer of its wholly owned subsidiary, the Philippine American Life and General Insurance Co.

Cuisia lists his mentors as Lito Sandejas in AIDC whom he worked closely with for eight years.

"Lito was my mentor on the technical side of finance. I came in assistant manager in AIDC and I learned techniques from him. We were the ones who started IPOs in the Philippines. We would stay up late in the press to oversee the printing of the prospectus. Lito was a patient man who would sit down with you and explain the rudiments of the issues and he explained things very clearly," Cuisia recalls.

His other mentor is Ambassador Ramon del Rosario, father of his best friend.

"I worked with him when he was Far East Bank chair and I was vice chair. He taught me about being able to contribute to society," he states.

Cuisia says he learned from Del Rosario the true principles of morality, integrity and how to treat employees with equality. He was also shown the importance of social conscience and responsibility.

CUISIA, the finance man, circa late 80s..

CUISIA and his best friend Ramon del Rosario Jr married ladies named Victoria.

What do Meryl Streep, Lee Iacocca and Dayanara Torres have in common?

120-year-old language center set to open doors in Manila

BERLITZ, the world's leading language service provider, is now in the Philippines. On March 11, the Berlitz Language Center is opening its doors at the Peninsula Court Building on Paseo de Roxas corner Makati Avenue in Makati City.

President Macapagal-Arroyo will lead the opening ceremony.

Established 120 years ago, the Berlitz Language Center is known for its quality instruction and quality output. It boasts of having taught second languages to some of the most prominent people from various sectors of society.

The alumni list includes celebrities, writers, political leaders and even monarchies. Names such as Meryl Streep Francois Mitterand, Katharine Hepburn, Lee Iacocca, American presidents John F. Kennedy, Jimmy Carter and Woodrow Wilson, Sinclair Lewis, Laura Esquivel, Enrico Caruso, Peter O'Toole, Tom Brokaw, Celine Dion, Dayanara Torres, Antonio Banderas Marlon Brando, King Alfonso XIII of Spain, John Lennon and many more are all in the Berlitz alumni list.

Berlitz is known to tailor-fit their instruction to specific student needs and wants such as career mobility, leisure travel, educational requirement, or family and social enrichment.

Its most distinct feature is its non-traditional yet proven method of instruction, the Berlitz Method—a process that involves conversation instead of lectures in a classroom setup.

The school offers an extensive collection of learning modules and provides the necessary assistance, instruction and built-in proficiency checks of students to check their level of learning.

Berlitz's languages instructors are not linguistics graduates and are not required of such a degree. Some of them are Filipinos who can speak foreign languages the way native speakers can. Berlitz also employs foreign nationals as teachers. "Basically, Berlitz is a network of schools. We can source our instructors from other Berlitz centers in other countries, if it is very necessary," Renato Constantino Jr., Berlitz's board chair, says.

At present, Berlitz already has an impressive roster of instructors of various languages that include nationals from China, Italy, France, Australia, USA, Japan, Taiwan, and of course, the Philippines. In fact, Berlitz's language instructors from other Berlitz centers in other parts of the globe have been flown in to train the local teachers.

As of now, the most requested languages are Mandarin and Japanese, by the business community and French, mostly for personal reasons. Berlitz strongly encourages the expat community to enroll because the rates here are relatively cheaper than in the Berlitz centers in other countries.

There are also steps to create relevant language modules designed to serve specific industries such as Call Centers where the Philippines is expected to play a major role in the near future due to our English-speaking workforce and our apparent facility with foreign languages.

Berlitz tailor-fits a program for each student or group of students because students have specific goals or reasons for learning a second language. The courses here are customized or categorized. For example, a course can be very specific as English for Business.

Aside from the business community, Berlitz also wishes to tap other local institutions of learning and play a complementary role to them. One of their goals right now is to empower good English teachers who come from different educational backgrounds. In fact, Berlitz is already recognized and accredited by premier universities and institutions of learning such as Harvard University, Princeton University and the English as Second Language Center.

But its most important goal is to open new opportunities for the global citizen. Berlitz encourages people who aspire to be successful and marketable in other parts of the globe. According to Constantino, "A Berlitz certificate does not only look good on the resumé, it is also a very practical investment."

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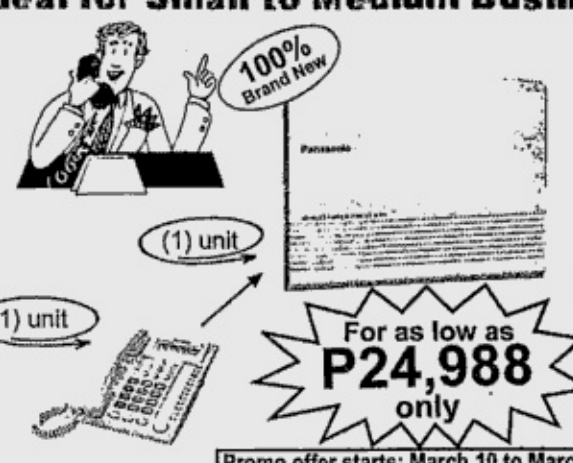

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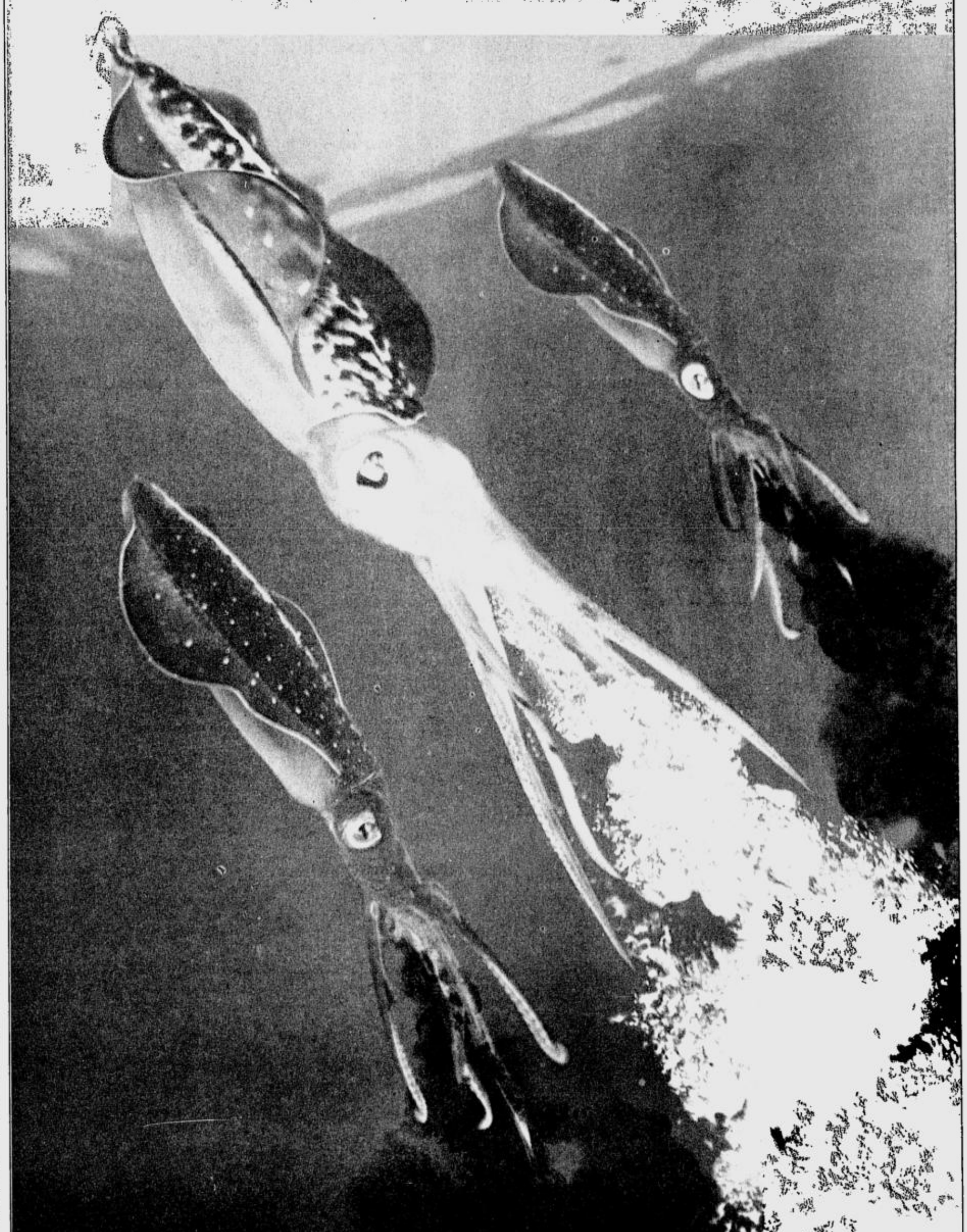

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From page B2

He points out: "Both heroic sales rep and the product champion try to compensate for organizational disorder by personally harnessing uncoordinated activities into a purposeful whole. They are substitutes for discipline and process, but in the long run, they can't succeed."

His prescription: Discipline. "Discipline does not eliminate the need for creativity. On the contrary, it actually encourages them by providing a frame for individual work. Structure ensures that the parts come together as a whole."

Hammer has more to offer in this book. He criticizes measurement as purely a financial report after the fact. Using these measures, he says, is "like trying to manage a baseball game today by using last year's win-loss record to tell you whether to call a hit or a bunt."

In effect, Hammer wants the company liberated from suffocating procedures and structures so that it can concentrate on the most important factor in business: the customer.

Of course, that was easier said than done, and a facile interpretation may mislead us to wrong conclusions. All he wants to say, though, is couched in his own inimitable style: "Pierce the veil that separates you from your customers."

This requires leadership resolve to make changes, even fire people who don't believe in your initiatives. You've got a choice: make your company dominant or be extinct. He has made it so clear what your choice should be. *(dantemv@i-next.net)*

GI Joe's reading stuff gives rise to a very popular bookstore

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THERE is a saying in the activist community that you cannot claim to be a revolutionary or a leftist if you do not know Popular Bookstore.

Popular Bookstore, after all, is the only bookstore in town that sells a wide range of political science books including the writings of Mao Tse-Tung, Vladimir Lenin, Karl Marx and Sun Tzu.

These were the kind of books that traditional bookstores dared not carry because of the "controversial" content.

Popular president Katherine Po, however, says that it was only through reading books such as these that new ideas are formed and then applied, some of which could end up changing ourselves and our community for the better.

"A bookstore has to make a statement and our statement is that we want to loosen up mindsets and widen the horizon of people through books. The more choices we have, then the more ideas we can generate," Po says.

This was the philosophy laid down by Popular Bookstore founder Joaquin Po who put up the company in 1946 when the American forces left after liberation.

"At that time the American forces left behind a lot of pocketbooks or paperbacks and my father got them and sold them using a *kariton*," Po said.

The *kariton* eventually made way for a tiny hole-in-the-wall bookstore in Doroteo Jose which was a bustling commercial area in the late 1940s.

The late Po initially went into book selling for the business part of it. There was a lot of business to be made at that time as people were hungry for information, for education.

PINOY ENTREPRENEUR

But as he read more of the books that he was selling, the business side of Popular Bookstore became incidental and the passion became paramount.

"He became a lover of books and he started to import books directly. He read all the books and chose the books himself. This made our selection different from the others. As we say here, we are book sellers to book lovers like our father," Po explained.

As Po's appetite for books increased, so did the variety of books that the Popular Bookstore carried.

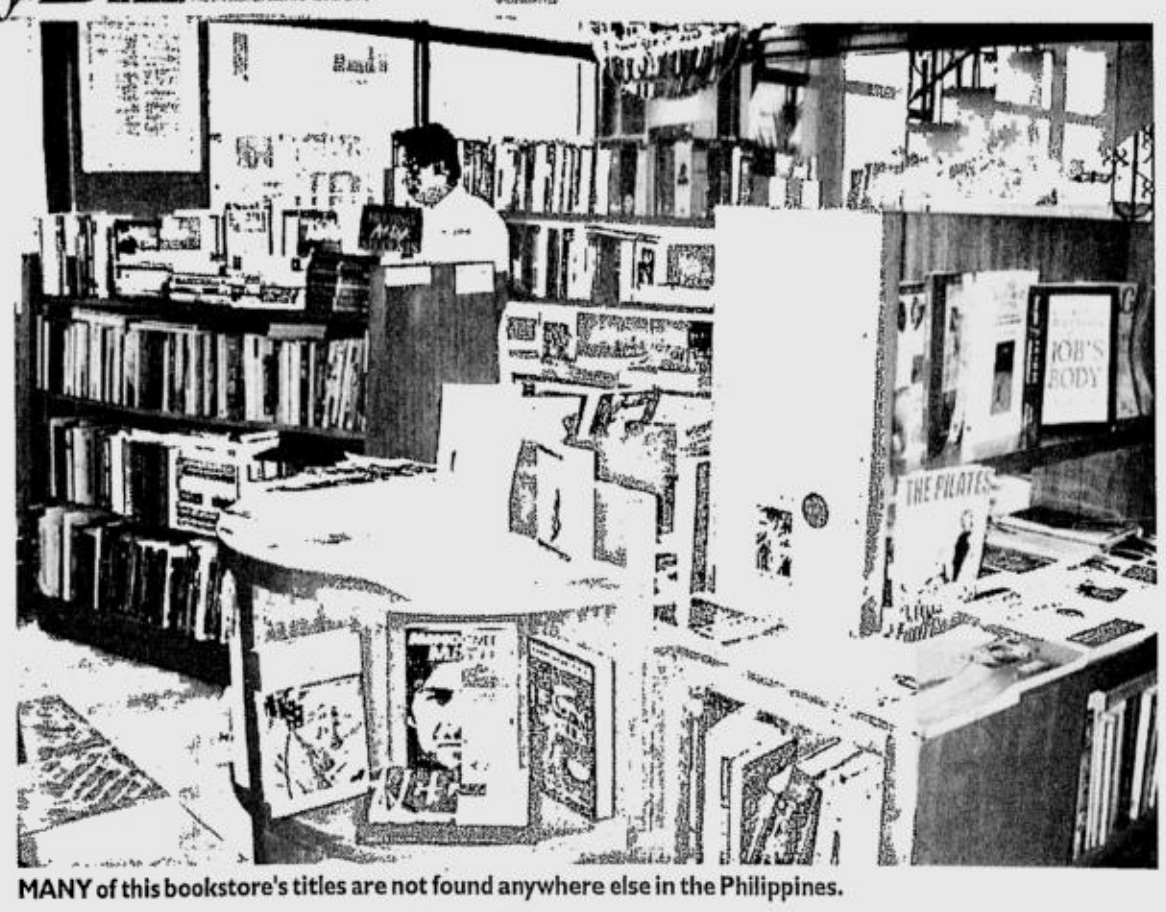
From the political science books, Popular Bookstore moved on to getting the best in literature, history and social science books.

It is also not common knowledge that Popular Bookstore actually carried a wide range of technical books, particularly in the fields of architecture and engineering.

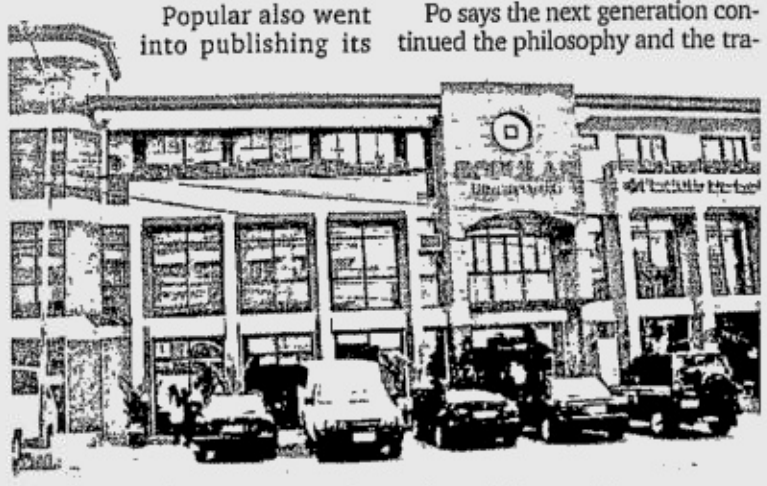
Popular carried these books because it was near the university belt, right next to the Mapua Institute of Technology, one of the best engineering schools in the country.

The elder Po chose the architecture and technical books using the same standard as choosing the political science books. He only got what was the latest and the best for the students, not necessarily the most commercial books.

Popular also went into publishing its own books, almost as soon as it started selling imported books.



MANY of this bookstore's titles are not found anywhere else in the Philippines.


POPULAR Bookstore moves to its new home in Quezon City.

Its published books were no less valuable, with titles such as the biography of rebel leader Edgar Jopson, although it also published textbooks for engineering, math and psychology.

Po says the next generation continued the philosophy and the tradition of Popular Bookstore, even after the sad but necessary decision to move the store from Doroteo Jose to the present site along Tomas Morato extension.

From the good old political science and technical books, Katherine Po says she added new categories such as gender studies, psychology and books on new age philosophies in keeping with the times and changing tastes of clients.

Just like her father, Katherine chooses the books personally and she also computes the prices herself.

Asked why Popular did not put up another branch in the 55 years that it has been in operation, Po says it was a conscious decision to keep the operations small in favor of a close relationship with the clients.

Popular Bookstore has become the favorite hangout of some of the country's academicians and literary greats who were always dropping by to get the latest books in their fields.

"We know our customers and some have been with us for decades," she says.

The new titles and sections have also attracted new book lovers to the fold—especially those who were fed up by the deteriorating quality of books carried by other bookstores.

Po says the retail bookstore side of the business has remained more of a passion for the Po family even after her father's death four years ago.

"It is really the publishing side of the business that keeps us afloat but we are very happy with the bookstore. It has become an institution and when you have all these books around you, it makes life more fulfilling and interesting," she says.

DISPLAY of food products for export attracts Filipinos abroad.

OFWs biggest market for RP food exports

THE MILLIONS of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) scattered in various countries throughout the globe have emerged as the biggest and most vital market of the flourishing, multimillion-dollar Filipino food export industry.

The foreign exchange earnings from the sale of native food exports to overseas workers have not only contributed significantly to the revenues of these food exporters and processors but also in boosting the country's international reserves.

The role of overseas Filipino workers in the growth of the local food industry was confirmed by Florence Foods Corp., the leading exporter of Pinoy food products to the world, as it acknowledged the importance of the new technology in making these products more accessible to foreign buyers, notably Filipino workers, through the magic and power of the Internet.

Florence Foods recently launched the website Pinoy Supermart as an online showcase for its complete range of native food products and services that cater to OFWs throughout the world.

According to Florence Foods, the dramatic increase in the overseas employment of thousands of seafarers, professional nurses and health personnel, information technologists and other skilled Filipino workers in the first seven months of 2001 has brought about a dramatic growth in demand for ethnic Pinoy products such as processed fish, coconut milk, fruit preserves, condiments and dried marine products.

Florence Foods identified the biggest overseas market for Pinoy native products as the United States, where 2.4 million Filipino immigrants and expatriates live and work, comprising the second largest group in the US.

In the Middle East, Saudi Arabia has the highest concentration of OFW's with 915,000, followed by United Arab Emirates (170,000), Kuwait (60,000), Qatar (35,000), Bahrain (30,000) and Oman (25,000).

There was also a big increase in the need for Pinoy food products by OFWs in Asian countries such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Brunei, Japan and South Korea.

The concentration of OFWs in these Middle East and Asian countries represents the bulk of more than 7.34 million OFWs, which constitute a sizeable market for local food products.

According to Florence Foods, the emergence of Asia as a popular worker destinations of OFWs—in contrast to the Middle East in 1970s—has made local food products more accessible to overseas workers because of faster delivery due to geographical proximity, cheaper cost and freshness of the food products.

The availability of these ethnic products has resulted in the preservation of the unique and distinct Filipino culinary culture amidst the multi-cultural society that local workers encounter abroad.

Even in more industrialized countries like the United States, which hosts the biggest concentration of Filipino immigrants, the native Filipino culture continues to thrive because of the availability of Filipino food products in various forms.

Local exporters like Florence Foods have made these products available to Pinoy consumers through local importers and distributors such as Oriental groceries and food stores.

Florence Foods is now the one-stop-supermarket for overseas Filipinos and the leading exporter of ethnic Filipino food products for Filipino communities abroad.

Curry software gears for 'Made in India' push

BANGALORE, India—From the popular Hotmail service acquired by Microsoft Corp. to the Pentium chip owned by Intel, Indians have been at the core of the technology revolution that powered an economic boom in the 1990s.

Enough for writer Michael Lewis to say that "the definitive smell inside a Silicon Valley start-up was of curry."

But missing was a tell-tale tag: Made in India.

A handful of pioneers in India's technology capital are now trying to change that, aiming to turn the nation from a pool of cut-rate software programmers to a center for finished products that carry high profit margins.

"For the last two decades, 'Made By Indians' is a popular thing but 'Made in India' is not very popular. Our entire mission is to change that," Deepak Ghaisas, chief executive of the Indian operations of software firm i-flex solutions Ltd., told Reuters.

I-flex, which makes back-end products that power banks, is planning an initial public offering (IPO) of shares later this month or in April in what would be the first significant Indian product company to go public.

Indian talent hidden

Indian talent has thus far largely hid behind multinational labels. With a global downturn hitting technology spending, India's traditional software service companies are under intense pricing pressures. High-end, finished products are seen as the way forward.

Software services involve code-writing often billed by the hour like a tailoring job, while a product, such as Microsoft's MS Word, is essentially a big bundle of codes which can be copied, reducing costs and adding brand value.

Alongside i-flex, Talisma Corp., incorporated in the US but based in Bangalore, is now counted among global leaders in customer relations management (CRM) software with Sony Corp. and Samsung ranking among its clients.

Sitting in her office above a bowling alley in Bangalore, Rekha Menon, one of Talisma's co-founders, says she and her co-founder Pradeep Singh took a leap in the dark when they plunged into the product area in 1996.

"The DNA of a product company and service company are very different," the lean, bespectacled Menon told Reuters. "The product business is long haul and has high risk."

Experts say Indian software service companies facing pricing pressures must develop products to charm the capital markets.

"The rest of us are condemned to lower margins, competition from China with an arguably better record at mass production of commodities, and a future down in the dumps," venture capitalist Mahesh Murthy wrote in Business Today magazine last month.

Product companies rely on blending technology with a close understanding of customer needs, design, quality and brand power to reap higher profit margins. They also gain from program upgrades.

Both i-flex and Talisma have founders who cut their teeth in global giants, learning the ropes of the product business.

I-flex is 48.5 percent owned by Citigroup, where its founders worked earlier. Talisma's Singh was a product manager at Microsoft.

The companies have their main chief executive officers sitting in the United States, close to key customers and markets.

Indian heart and brain

Talisma was born out of Aditi Technologies, a service company that provided technical support for developers using Microsoft technologies.

Talisma's founders yanked out 14 of Aditi's best engineers and talked them out of working for Microsoft in the United States. Instead they set about designing a product. The team found help from Hungarian-born Kornel Marton, who designed Microsoft's popular MS Word program.

But Talisma had to junk 18 months of design after it proved faulty. It also faced difficulties in raising funds in India, where venture capitalists preferred low-risk service companies.

Talisma eventually got incorporated in the United States, where it has since raised $53 million from venture funds, but 400 of its nearly 500 employees function from India.

"It is only a legal entity in the US," Menon said. "The heart and the brain of the company are in India."

I-flex founders, Shanx Ravisankar and Rajesh Hukku, took a bet on the financial industry more than a decade ago, and are now seeing the gains.

I-flex now serves about 330 financial institutions in 80 countries, and Citibank is set to deploy its Flexcube software in 100 countries. About half of its 2,100 employees are in Bangalore, where i-flex is building a $10-million complex.

Attitude shift

Like Talisma and i-flex, iCode, headquartered in the United States but functioning substantially out of Bangalore, is reaching out globally with software that helps small and medium firms manage accounts, sales, shipping inventories and e-commerce.

Sanjay Shah, one of iCode's three founders, shifted to Bangalore in 1996 from the United States and recalls his frustration on a monsoon night, when he got stranded on a waterlogged road.

"The mosquitoes were biting, but I said I am going to do an attitude shift or it ain't gonna happen," Shah said.

Things have come a long way. iCode is now debating whether to make India its headquarters. About 35 of its staff, mainly in sales, are in the United States while 320 are in India.

ICode's product AccWare, whose Windows version was entirely built in India, has 1,200 customers in the United States. Its latest product, Everest, launched in December, is being readied in Spanish, French, German, Italian, Russian, Portuguese and Korean.

There have been some setbacks, too.

Hyderabad-based VisualSoft Technologies, which made intermediate tools to help build end-use software, is now focusing only on services after being hit by cutbacks in technology spending in the United States.

But it is different for others. An Indian base now means newer, cheaper product versions with 24-hour support, Talisma's Menon said.

"We now use 'Made in India' as a competitive advantage." ***Reuters***

DOST launches 'basura buster'

A BIOREACTOR designed by Filipino scientists capable of transforming biodegradable wastes into soil-enriching compost is now being commissioned at the Smokey Mountain district in Tondo, Manila.

The huge garbage dump that once symbolized more than waste mismanagement right in the heart of the country's capital is being developed into an environmental rehabilitation showcase.

Among several options, the bioreactor will mainly deal with solid wastes churned by Metro Manila residents. It forms the main technology package of the composting technology training and testing facilities being undertaken by the Industrial Technology Development Institute (ITDI), an agency of the Department of Science and Technology (DOST).

Science and Technology Secretary Estrella Alabastro in a recent press conference, presented the bioreactor project initiated by DOST-ITDI's microbiology and genetics division led by Engr. Romeo Cabacang. According to ITDI, a 2-tons/day showcase and training facility at the Smokey Mountain aims to enhance social acceptability and is expected to become operational by end of March this year.

This ITDI technology has been field-tested with promising results in the following areas: 100 kg/day scale for market wastes composting in Bulacan, Bulacan; 400 kg/day scale for sludge composting at the United Pulp and Paper Co. in Calumpit, Bulacan; and 400 kg/day scale for household waste composting at Philam Homes Subdivision and Alabang Hills Subdivision in Muntinlupa.

Several private and local government units from Metro Manila and provinces have already signified their interest to acquire and employ this bioreactor technology in their respective areas. ITDI is now working overtime for the full-scale commercialization of the 2-tons/day composting technology by early next year.

The bioreactor concept, however, will rely on an effective waste segregation scheme by the host community to be successful.

So far, this DOST-ITDI project has found allies in community organizations called Sambayanan ng Muling Pagkabuhay Multi-Purpose Cooperative (SMPMPC), and the Ecological Alternative Guild (EAG)—both promote waste reduction, reuse, and recycling. The EAG is an environmental youth group many of whom were former child scavengers of Smokey Mountain.

DOST-ITDI is pushing for composting technology on the municipal level to reduce said wastes which, based on its study, 56 percent is biodegradable and 28 percent recyclable. Metro Manila alone produces over 6,000 tons of wastes daily.

The bioreactor technology is comparatively beneficial to health and environment against traditional landfill because it eliminates groundwater contamination, emits insignificant odor, accelerates composting process, limits worm and proliferation, and consumes minimal operational power.

On top of the environmental bonanza, the bioreactor turns wastes into compost ideal for growing vegetables, flowers, and propagating seed crops, ITDI said. ***S&T Media Service***

APTECH COMPUTER EDUCATION PHILIPPINES

1986 – A VISION OF QUALITY EDUCATION

APTECH COMPUTER EDUCATION, a division of APTECH Worldwide, began its journey into computer education in 1986 as a one-center operation in Mumbai. It was then a division of Apple Industries. From that time, it has grown internationally and received much accolade for the superior quality education that it has developed and has come to be known for.

In 1994, APTECH was one of the first educational institutions in Asia to receive the coveted ISO 9001 Certification for Education Support Services. This certification recognizes the international quality levels that APTECH has attained in courseware design, examination systems and placement services.

In 1997, APTECH was awarded the Global Growth Company Award from the World Economic Forum for consistent financial growth and a strong corporate vision.

TODAY – A REALITY OF QUALITY ACHIEVEMENTS

After more than a decade and a reach of over 2,436 centers in over 52 countries across the globe, APTECH is now Asia's largest provider of quality computer education and training.

Today, APTECH is proud to offer its international standards of Information Technology education to the students and professionals of the Philippines.

APTECH challenges them to take on its career-specific course programs imparted through our interactive teaching techniques, state-of-the-art technology and experienced faculty.

APTECH invites them to a self-fulfilling career in the world of high-quality professionals undeterred by the challenges of an ever-changing industry – one that will shape the very progress of humanity. APTECH proudly offers to the world its graduates who are eager to take on this privileged responsibility.

THE APTECH MISSION IN THE PHILIPPINES

APTECH is an organization that has a sense of purpose. In the Philippines, it wishes to serve as the catalyst for improving the quality of affordable IT education.

EDUCATION CENTERS AND CAREER PROGRAMS

APTECH opened two types of education centers in the Philippines, namely: 1) Centers for Advanced IT Education, and 2) Centers for IT Career Development, demonstrating APTECH's cognizance of two important segments of IT training and education consumers, each with differing needs.

The Centers for Advanced IT Education, located in the Ortigas Center and Makati business districts, exist to serve the training requirements of corporations and IT professionals seeking to upgrade their skills. These education centers also provide non-IT professionals with a portal through which they can jump into a renewed career in information technology. These centers offer career programs on advanced Java programming, database management systems, web application development and network/systems administration. APTECH delivers such courses more swiftly than alternative sources of training. Corporate clients and individual enrollees can thus put their newly acquired IT expertise into productive use sooner.

APTECH PRO-ADVANCE SPECIALIZATION SERIES

The career programs offered by APTECH Centers for Advanced IT Education have been labeled as the **PRO-ADVANCE** series. There are currently four specialization options available in this series:

- Internet Applications (using Java technology)
- Business Data Management (using Oracle technology)
- Network and Systems Administration (using Microsoft technology)
- Global Web Development

Competent students can finish any of the above IT specialization courses in less than a year.

A Center for IT Career Development, which offers one- and two-year diploma courses, exists inside the Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Soon, another such center will be opening its doors in Manila. Industrious students often enroll at these centers in simultaneity with their regular classes.

APTECH achieves continuous excellence by maintaining its focus on what it does best -- IT training and education. It is thus a pure-play company in the IT education industry. APTECH offers nothing but hard-core information technology subjects, topics wherein its instructors are certified specialists.

APTECH's UNIQUE SELLING PROPOSITION: SUPERIOR ACADEMIC MACHINERY AND RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

APTECH Worldwide conducts continuous market research to always know what technologies and skills are most in demand by leading corporations. Such research is the basis for the development of relevant career programs. All APTECH students are automatically given course books that are exclusively designed and produced by APTECH Worldwide.

APTECH maintains research and development divisions that continuously develop its curricula, course materials and training methods. Having its very own R&D units allows APTECH to achieve higher value in the creation of its education support systems than if it were to rely solely on borrowing products from other training providers. R&D units exist in Princeton, New Jersey, U.S.A. as well as in Mumbai, India. APTECH's R&D units are operating under the guidance of its Technology Advisory Group (TAG), the core group of professionals made up of IT leaders from industry, software development firms from various countries, government, and the academe. They are in continuous collaboration with leading corporations such as Microsoft, Sun Microsystems, IBM, Lotus, and Adobe. ***This allows APTECH to keep abreast of industry trends and stay ahead of its competition by being the first to offer courses on new technologies. APTECH is capable of developing training curricula and course materials even before the associated technologies are released to the market.***

APTECH instructors around the world are educated at academic facilities intended solely for the training of its trainers. These trainers' training centers reside in the cities of Pune and Chennai, India. All of APTECH'S instructors are required to pass rigid certification requirements prior to being allowed to teach. They are likewise mandated to undergo periodic re-certification as new technologies become available in the market. APTECH instructors are all full-time employees. The inherent undivided attention that they give to the APTECH educational institution reinforces the quality of services that can only be delivered by dedicated professionals.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

All APTECH education centers are periodically monitored regarding their adherence to quality standards covering the following areas:

- Academic proficiency of instructors (all of whom are full-time employees).
- Proper functionality of IT infrastructure and learning facilities.
- Sufficiency of reference materials in student libraries.

CORPORATE CLIENTS

APTECH already has a list of valued corporate clients in the Philippines. This includes the Bureau of Communications Services – Office of the Press Secretary, the Local Government Academy – Department of the Interior and Local Government, JDH Philippines, BayanTrade, SMITS Inc., etc.

ENROLLMENT IN APTECH PRO-ADVANCE COURSES

Enrollment in APTECH is exclusively for those who have sufficient aptitude for IT. Every prospective student is assessed by our Career Counselors in terms of IT-related skills and experience. Those who have absolutely no background in computers may be subjected to an aptitude examination. To provide a better learning environment and personal attention, APTECH limits its batch size to a maximum of 15 students only.

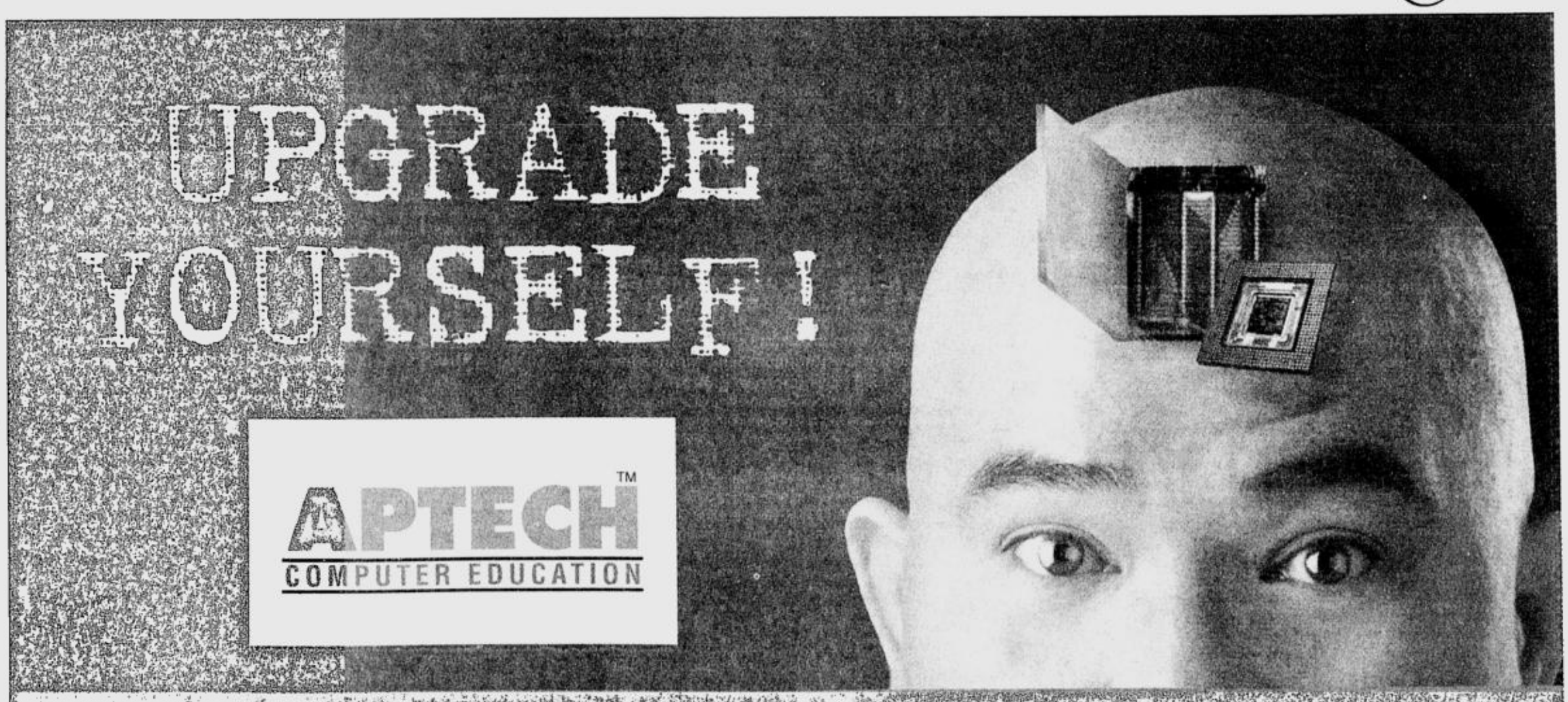
APTECH's Pro-Advance career programs begin with the IT Fundamentals modules, which are designed to expose APTECH students to the various facets of IT in preparation for their chosen specialization(s). At the end of the IT Fundamentals modules, students will be equipped with the basics of programming logic, web technologies as well as concepts of database management systems and networking technology.

Be familiar with ***C language*** – one of the most popular structured programming languages in the world. Create web pages with ***HyperText Markup Language (HTML), Dynamic HTML (DHTML) and JavaScript***. Author a web page like the pros with ***Dreamweaver***. Get savvy with database creation and management using ***SQL Server 2000*** and learn the ***essentials of networking***.

After completion of the entire program, students will be on their way to profitable and fulfilling careers in IT.

Simply call any of our offices to schedule a consultation with our ***Career Counselors***.

APTECH WORLDWIDE



Your career advancement depends on what's in your head.

Enroll at APTECH now and get a headstart in IT. Specialize in the cutting-edge technology of your choice. APTECH offers career programs on advanced Java programming, database management systems, web application development and network/systems administration. A profitable and fulfilling career in information technology awaits you.

www.aptech-globaltraining.com

For more details, you may call or visit any of these APTECH education centers:

ORTIGAS CENTER
2nd Floor Agustin I Building,
Emerald Avenue
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
636-4382 to 84
ortigas@aptech-philippines.com

MAKATI
3rd Floor Madison Building
904 Arnaiz Avenue, Makati City
813-4516 to 18
makati@aptech-philippines.com

SUBIC
Building Q; 7931 A. Manila Avenue
Subcom Area, Subic Bay Freeport Zone
Olongapo City
(047) 252-2605
subic@aptech-philippines.com

MANILA
4th Floor Laboda Center
1139 España Avenue cor. Adelina Street
Sampaloc, Manila
manila@aptech-philippines.com

APTECH WORLDWIDE

Philippine Regional Office
Agustin I Building, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, 1605 Pasig City, Metro Manila, Philippines
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HCCA International is one of the oldest and most respected international healthcare management and recruitment companies in the world, with over **28 years** of healthcare management, staffing and consulting services expertise. HCCA International is leveraging and expanding its well-established international healthcare recruitment and staffing services business to include recruitment into the USA. Todate, HCCA International has recruited over **20,000** medical, nursing and professional staff from the **United States, Canada, Europe, the Philippines, Australia / New Zealand, the Middle East** and **India** for placement in facilities of its international clients.

Please join us for a personal interview for placement with the **VANGUARD HEALTH SYSTEM of warm and sunny PHOENIX, ARIZONA.** Our benefit package is generous and will include:

- ALL LICENSING & IMMIGRATION RELATED FEES ARE FREE PAID BY HCCA
- RETENTION BONUS (CURRENTLY US$3,000 PER 12 MONTHS)
- MOBILIZATION & REPATRIATION - PROVIDE AIR FARE
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- SHIFT PREMIUMS
- 30 DAYS ACCOMMODATION PROVIDED
- IN MOST CASES CONTRACTS ARE FOR TWO (2) YEARS AND ARE RENEWABLE WITH AGREEMENT OF ALL PARTIES

If you are a registered nurse with minimum one (1) year experience and looking for a new challenge, we would like to hear from you immediately in order that necessary documentation can be completed before your interview.

PERSONAL INTERVIEWS WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM HCCA WILL BE CONDUCTED ON THE FOLLOWING:

MANILA
IPAMS OFFICE, Malate, Manila
March 21, 22, 23, 24 & 25, 2002

CEBU CITY
Waterfront Hotel, Lahug, Cebu City
March 23 & 24, 2002

★ We are open during SUNDAYS to accept applicants. ★

PERSONALLY APPLY SOONEST FOR INCLUSION IN THE FINAL INTERVIEW:

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SINCE 1972
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INDUSTRIAL PERSONNEL AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES, INC.
1455 Leon Guinto Sr. St., 1004 Malate, Manila, Philippines

IPAMS / HCCA PROJECT:
Tel. Nos. 524 8661 to 63
E-mail: ipams_us@mydestiny.net
Fax Nos. (632) 521 1189 / 521 1320
Website: www.ipams.com.ph

Republic of the Philippines
NATIONAL ELECTRIFICATION ADMINISTRATION
Quezon City

NEEDED IMMEDIATELY

GENERAL MANAGER

FOR

Quezon I Electric Cooperative, Inc.
(QUEZELCO I)
Poctol, Pitogo, Quezon

Qualifications

Applicant may be male or female, must be at least 30 but not more than 55 years old, college graduate (in Business Management, Accounting/Finance, Engineering or Behavioral Sciences) preferably with Master's degree in Business Management Administration or Industrial Management, and must have at least five (5) years supervisory experience.

STARTING SALARY P25,000.00

Application forms and additional information may be obtained at the Cooperative Operations Department, 3rd Floor, NEA Building, NIA Road, Government Center, Diliman, Quezon City, or at the Regional Electrification Office IV, Parian, Calamba, Laguna. Deadline for submission of application forms is on **19 March 2001.**

(Sgd.) **FRANCISCO G. SILVA**
Administrator

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

The country's leading newspaper is looking for:

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT

- College graduate with background in Journalism or Mass Communication
- 2-4 years experience with at least 1 year as an editorial assistant
- Knowledge in Computer Office and Layouting software Operations
- Proofreading skills, Encoding skills, Writing skills

Mail your application letter, comprehensive resumé to:

HR MANAGEMENT SERVICES HEAD
Philippine Daily Inquirer
Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo)
Corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City

E-mail: recruitment@inquirer.com.ph

GOING STRAIGHT
Hair Straightening Salon

Our salon is currently undergoing a rapid expansion for the year 2002-2003. We urgently need the following positions:

HR OFFICER
- College degree preferably in Psychology or Behavioral Science
- With at least 3-years experience in all facets of Human Resources specifically in Employee Relation
- Female, 24 - 26 years old
- Above average oral and written English communication skills
- Computer literate
- Excellent interpersonal skills
- A team player

ACCOUNTING STAFF
- Accounting graduate
- 23- 28 years old, single
- Preferably with at least 2 years experience in payroll and other accounting functions
- Result oriented and can work with minimum supervision
- Computer literate

Interested applicants may apply with their Resume & other credentials (TOR, NBI, SSS, TIN & Employment Certificate) at:

Unit T-7, 3rd Flr., Sunvar Plaza Building, Amorsolo cor. Pasay Road, Makati City
Tel. Number 843-8634 / 887-2616

Be a part of the fastest growing salon chain in the country.

NEEDED IMMEDIATELY!!!

SALES ENGINEERS

- Electrical Engineer/BSEE newly Grad. are also welcome
- 24 to 35 years old; Willing to travel in the provinces
- Has the ability to make a good Technical Presentation
- Knowledge in Technical Selling and Commissioning of "Variable Frequency Drives; Capacitor Banks and Transient Voltage Suppressors" will be an advantage!

Apply in person between 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 nn at

ARIZONA Marketing Corporation
99 F. Munalo St., Cubao, Quezon City
or call Tel. No. 726-5991

Pls. bring resumé, 2x2 ID picture, transcript of records, etc.

Community-Based Ecological Solid Waste Management System In the Philippines

URGENT RECRUITMENT

An international organization implementing a community-based ecological solid waste management system in the Philippines is in search of qualified individuals for the following positions, based in Metro Manila :

Project Coordinator / Manager

Technical Accountabilities :

A. Project Management
1. Ensure the effective appraisal, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Project
2. Identify potential funding sources, and develop and submit proposals for the Project
3. Coordinate planning and review processes at the Project level, ensuring appropriate stakeholder participation
4. Ensure the timely administration of the Project including but not limited to the preparation of financial and project reports in compliance with required guidelines, systems and audit standards
5. Facilitate linking and learning across country, as well as regional / international programs
6. Ensure effective liaison with both local government units (LGUs), national government agencies (DENR, MMDA, others), non-government partner organizations and other relevant national, regional and provincial groups working on solid waste management
7. Maintain effective information flow and analysis, and contribute to responses to general development issues and trends in solid waste management

B. Budget
1. Ensure the effective financial management of the Project, including budgeting, cash flow forecasting, fund transfers and documentation both at the Project and partner organization levels
2. Approve contractual commitments of the Project based on approval authority
3. Ensure adequate measures are in place to meet donor requirements

C. Human Resources
1. Ensure effective human resource management of the Project, including staff recruitment, selection, induction, performance appraisals, training and development

Qualifications :
1. A higher degree or equivalent experience in a relevant discipline, with knowledge in solid waste management issues and trends.
2. At least five years experience in solid waste management and/or community organizing
3. At least five years experience in program management, including design, evaluation and policy development.
4. Must have excellent written and oral communication skills as well as strong program planning, analysis and evaluation skills.
5. Must have program management skills and a proven financial, administrative and human resource management skills
6. Must have the capacity to link micro field-based project work with macro public policy issues
7. Must be proficient in the use of various application softwares, such as MS Word, Excel, Access, etc.

Administrative / Finance Assistant

Technical Accountabilities :

1. Prepare all check requests, memorandum of receipts, and adjusting journal entries, with the proper supporting documentations
2. Record into the Project's Financial System all financial transactions of the Project on a daily basis
3. Assist the Finance Officer in the preparation of monthly bank reconciliation and cash recaps
4. Liase and maintain a healthy working relationship with the local bank from which the Project has opened the Project bank account, including making the necessary bank visits
5. Support the Finance Officer in personnel management matters through the timely preparation of back-up worksheets to facilitate prompt remittances to Project staff's contributions to GSIS / SSS, BIR, Pag-Ibig, etc.
6. Provide support to the procurement functions of the Project by facilitating the complete procurement process, including canvassing of quotations, preparing matrix of comparisons of quotations and liasing with MMDA's local PBAC or with UNDP, etc.
7. Fulfill a secretarial support function for the Project Management Office (PMO), including filing of documents, answering phone calls, typing of communications and reports, etc.

Qualifications :
1. Bachelor's degree on any relevant course
2. At least three years experience in bookkeeping and accounting
3. Must be proficient in the use of various application softwares, such as MS Word, Excel, Access, etc.

Driver / Mechanic

Technical Accountabilities :

1. Ensure that the Project vehicle is maintained at good working conditions at all times
2. Secure safety of Project vehicle
3. Drive Project staff
4. Deliver / pick-up Project documents / materials
5. Extend support services during official functions like meetings, conferences, workshops, etc.
6. Arrange and monitor regular vehicle repair / maintenance jobs

Qualifications :
1. Holder of a professional driver's license
2. At least six years experience
3. Familiar with road routes in Metro Manila
4. Experience and working knowledge in the repair of vehicles

All application letters and comprehensive resume should reach our office on or before 14 March 2002. Address applications to the Development Support Services Center, United Nations Development Programme, 7th Floor, NEDA sa Makati Bldg., 106 Amorsolo Street, Legaspi Village, Makati City (via courier) or P.O. Box 7285 Domestic Airport Post Office Lock Box 1300 Domestic Road, Pasay City (via airmail), tel. nos. (632) 892-4528/892-0611 to 25.

A MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION IS LOOKING FOR YOU!

We are a Philippine-based multinational company with worldwide affiliation and at the middle of our expansion program.
We invite qualified and interested applicants for the post of:

BUSINESS MANAGERS

- 21 years old and above with pleasing personality
- Aggressive, analytical and can work under pressure
- Fluent in English and Chinese (is an advantage)
- Self-motivated and can work with minimum supervision
- A graduate of any four-year bachelor's degree

We provide Intensive Training

Our compensation and benefits are:
- Monthly allowance
- Five-figure monthly remuneration
- Incentives and awards
- US$ Dollars commissions
- Overseas holidays
- Good working environment

Qualified candidates may apply personally at:

11th Floor, THE PEAK TOWER BUILDING
107 L.P. Leviste Street, Brgy. Bel-Air
Salcedo Village, Makati City 1227
(from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)
11th March to 15th March 2002
Kindly look for Mr. Allan Rapadas or Mr. Marty Reyes

RNs, Immigrate to USA!

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Information & Apply Direct at:

http://www.ascensionhealthnurse.org

We offer a signing bonus!

WANTED
PROPERTY MANAGEMENT ASST.
- Male/Female
- 24-30 years old
- preferably with 1-2 years experience in commercial center leasing and admin.

Interested applicants may submit their Resumé, Photocopy of Transcript of Records, & 2x2 photo to:

Unit 23 The Facilities Center, Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City

---

jay c. designs

A DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING FIRM IS IN NEED OF THE FOLLOWING:

SECRETARY
- Female, single, at least 21 yrs. of age
- College graduate, computer literate
- Fluent in English and Pilipino

SALES EXECUTIVE
- M/F, single, at least 21 yrs. of age
- College graduate, computer literate
- At least one year selling experience

Please submit resume at the following outlets:
Basement, SM CITY North EDSA, Quezon City
5/F, Building A, SM MEGAMALL, Mandaluyong City
For inquiries please call ☎ 927-1776 or 929-7479

PHILIPPINE IRON CONSTRUCTION AND MARINE WORKS, INC.
POEA Certificate of Renewal No. POEA-004-LB-010802-R
is in need of:

INSTRUMENTATION ENGINEERS

FOR A POWER PLANT PROJECT IN KSA
Accreditation Certificate No. C-7138-3

QUALIFICATIONS:

MUST BE MALE, 25-40 YEARS OLD, AND:

1. Computer literate on computerized control system in Power Plant Instrumentation
   (Data base for instrumentation list and list of IO for DCIS)
2. Competent with CAD System on field drawings including interpretation/ preparation of as built drawings.

Please apply in person immediately and bring resumé, Employment Certificates and 2 pcs. 2x2 photos to:

PICMW INC.
728 Pedro Gil corner A. Vazquez Street
Malate, Manila
ATTN: Personnel Department

Resumés will be pre-screened for interview by Japanese principal.

NO FEES TO BE COLLECTED
MANPOWER POOLING ONLY
"MAG-INGAT SA ILLEGAL RECRUITERS"

All Suwerte Securities Corp.

A newly formed stock brokerage firm is in need of the following applicants:

(10) LICENSED STOCKBROKER
Should have actual experience on the trading floor
Should have active stockbroker license from SEC
Should have actual know-how on Maktrade system

(10) SETTLEMENT ASSISTANT
Should have actual know-how on BOSS system
Should have attended PCD seminar and have actual hands-on .

(10) CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT
Should have work experience in a stock brokerage firm
Should have a thorough knowledge of PSF, and SEC rules and regulations

(10) ACCOUNTING ASSISTANT
Graduate of Accounting
Working experience in a stock brokerage firm is an advantage

Applicants should not be more than 35 years old. Please forward your resume, transcript of records, and 2x2 picture to
1101 Orient Square Bldg., Emerald Ave., Ortigas, Pasig City

UCPB GENERAL Insurance Co., Inc.

A member of the UCPB Group and an ISO 9002 certified company belonging to the top ten non-life insurance companies in the Philippines. We seek highly qualified and motivated individuals to fill-up our present job vacancies at our Cabanatuan, Tacloban, Dumaguete, Butuan and General Santos Offices:

MARKETING ASSISTANTS
- ☑ Preferably resident of the above mentioned areas
- ☑ Graduate of any business course
- ☑ Not over 35 years old
- ☑ Marketing oriented
- ☑ Has the potential to head an extension office
- ☑ With basic knowledge of underwriting & claims processing
- ☑ Excellent communication skills
- ☑ Computer literate (MS Applications)

CASHIERS
- ☑ Preferably resident of the above mentioned areas
- ☑ Graduate of BS Accountancy
- ☑ Not over 25 years old
- ☑ Experience in similar job an advantage
- ☑ Good communication skills
- ☑ Computer literate (MS Applications)

PROCESSORS
- ☑ Preferably resident of the above mentioned areas
- ☑ Graduate of any business course
- ☑ Not over 25 years old
- ☑ Experience in underwriting and claims processing an advantage
- ☑ Good communication skills
- ☑ Computer literate (MS Applications)

OTHER OPENINGS

ACCOUNTANT (for Head Office)
- ☑ Graduate of BS Accountancy, CPA
- ☑ Not more than 28 years old
- ☑ With at least 3 years work experience in a supervisory level under the same position
- ☑ Good communication skills
- ☑ Computer literate (MS Application)

MARKETING ASSISTANTS
(for Manila, Alabang, Quezon City and Cagayan De Oro Offices)
- ☑ Qualifications – same as stated above (Marketing Assistants)

CASHIER (for Laoag Office)
- ☑ Qualifications – same as stated above (Cashiers)

For Cabanatuan applicants - You may come on March 14, 2002 from 9:00AM up to 4:00PM for testing together with your resume, Transcript of Records and recent 2x2 colored picture at Cocolife Office - 2nd Floor VP Building Concepcion Maharlika Highway, Cabanatuan City (near NE Pacific Mall)

For applicants in other areas - Please send your application letter with the above documents to: Human Resources and Administrative Services Department, UCPB GEN, 24th Floor LKG Tower, Ayala Avenue, Makati City or e-mail to personnel@ucpbgen.com - strictly no attachments

A new service company is looking for highly qualified and motivated individuals for the following positions:

NETWORK OPERATIONS CENTER ADMINISTRATOR

The Administrator is the manager of the Network Operations Center. This person will need to be a senior administrator with level four technical skills and with experience in managing a staff and an office.

QUALIFICATIONS:
- ☑ Administrative and project management skills with supervisory experience for 5 years
- ☑ Minimum of 3 years experience in creating budgets for offices and projects
- ☑ With MCSE Certification 5 years, within one product release
- ☑ CCNA Certification 3 years, within 3 years of present
- ☑ WAN Administration 3 years, within 2 years of present
- ☑ Minimum of 3 years Network Operations Center Leadership
- ☑ Minimum of 3 years Network Operations Center Practice
- ☑ Exposure on MS Exchange for a minimum of 3 years
- ☑ Expertise on Internet and Website applications, minimum of 2 years experience
- ☑ SQL Exposure, minimum of 2 years experience
- ☑ Background in working with multi-cultural environment and within multiple offices

SHIFT LEADER

The Center will be open for 24 hours a day seven days a week. Applicants must be willing to be assigned to any shift.

QUALIFICATIONS:
- ☑ General Information Technology experience for 5 years with current MCSE Certification for 2 years
- ☑ CCNA Certification for 2 years
- ☑ WAN Environment Management for 2 years
- ☑ Experience with management of a team for 2 years
- ☑ Project Management experience, current
- ☑ Experience in software deployment and enterprise management current
- ☑ A solid understanding of Internet and SQL

TECHNICIANS

QUALIFICATIONS:
- ☑ MCP current
- ☑ MS Windows NT/Windows 2000 experience current
- ☑ CCNA current or literate
- ☑ MS Exchange basics current or literate
- ☑ General IT experience, two years current
- ☑ In training for MCSE Certification, current or literate

Qualified applicants may submit their resumé, 2x2 picture, and other credentials to:

THE OFFICE MANAGER
11th Floor, Pacific Star Building
Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue corner Makati Avenue
Makati City

Please indicate position applied for and present salary (if employed)

DV MIX VIDEO EDITING. A Video Post Production specializing in producing AVP's for special occasions, corporate and documentaries.

We're looking for:

FREELANCE ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE
- ☐ Responsibilities include:
  - Establishing New Accounts • Making sure objectives, budgets & concepts are clearly communicated
- ☐ This position requires excellent communication skills and proven ability to close a deal.

FREELANCE NON-LINEAR EDITOR
- ☐ Proficiency with:
  - Adobe Premiere and photoshop • Adobe after effects • Creative Editing for corporate and special occasions

Send Resumé: **DV Mix Video Editing**
#309 Governor Santos Street, BF Homes, Parañaque City
Email: dvmix@usa.net
820-6394 / 826-4930

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL HEALTH COOPERATION
Bldg No 3 1st Floor San Lazaro Compound Rizal Avenue Sta Cruz Manila 1003
Telefax Nos 711-95-82 Tel no 781-86-43, 743-83-01 local 1310 1311, 1304
e-mail address bihc@doh.gov.ph website omega.doh.gov.ph/bihc

NOTICE

ECDP-02-021

The Department of Health under the Early Childhood Development Project is in need of a consultant (individual) for a short-term assignment as training and logistics coordinator for Regions 6, 7 & 12.

Interested individuals may get a copy of the Terms of Reference from the Early Childhood Development Project Office, Ground Floor, Building 3, San Lazaro Compound Sta. Cruz, Tayuman, Sta. Cruz, Manila. Letters of interest with curriculum vitae and salary history should be submitted on or before 15 March 2002 to the undersigned at the address below:

Office of the Director
Bureau of International Health Cooperation
Department of Health
Ground Floor, Building 3, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz
Manila, Philippines 1003

Should there be further inquiries, you may contact Ms. Sharon Andrea C. Lumpias, Executive Assistant II, Early Childhood Development Project at telefax no. (632) 743-8301 local 1343.

(Sgd.) REMEDIOS V.S. PAULINO
Director III
Officer-In-Charge
Bureau of International Health Cooperation

March 9 & 10, 2002 – Inquirer

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Suite 7-12 2nd Floor Midland Plaza
Adriatico Street, Ermita, Manila
Tel. 524-6280 / 526-0196 Fax: 522-7617
contactus@allies.ws
http://www.allies.ws

"we help students & young professionals build a career in many ways..."

INVITATION FOR TEACHERS

To Register and Have their Qualifications Evaluated

Teachers who have passed PBET, have advanced credits or special competencies, 3 to 5 years experience are invited to register and submit qualification documents. Teachers with experience at elementary or secondary levels in special education, science, math, music, counseling PE/Health, or vocational are encouraged. Qualifications will be assessed, and if needed be advised and/or assisted to undertake necessary retraining, and then take certification exams.

Successful and qualified teachers will have the opportunity to work abroad under our employ. Fielding shall be on a medium term temporary assignments or per academic term/year with remuneration based on qualifications plus usual entitlements provided by the host institutions to their regular employees.

Interested parties can send their resume, colored picture, transcript of records, proof of passing PBET exam, and contact addresses including email to:

MADECOR CAREER SYSTEMS
Suite 302 Prestige Towers
Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City

Or e-mail credentials to: *madecor@mozcom.com* or Visit webpage at *http//www.madecor.com* and register directly. Registry software is being tested and will be operational soon.

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INDEPENDENT. FLEXIBLE. RESOURCEFUL. BUSINESS-MINDED.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR SUCH INDIVIDUALS (AND MORE) TO BE PART OF OUR TEAM AS BUSINESS ASSOCIATES. OUR PACKAGE INCLUDES INCENTIVES AND COMMISSIONS PLUS THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE TRAINED AS A BUSINESS ENTREPRENEUR

BRING YOUR RESUMÉ AND 2x2 PICTURE AND APPLY PERSONALLY. GIVE YOURSELF THE CHANCE TO BE YOUR OWN BOSS

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Fax: (781) 239-1454

ARE YOU a SINGLE FEMALE with a knock-out PERSONALITY, has Good Communication Skills, is AMBITIOUS, SELF-DRIVEN, AGGRESSIVE, HARDWORKING, PATIENT and has sales experience?

Earn a guaranteed income of at least P 9,000 a month!

INTERESTED? Report to our office ASAP starting on March 11 up to 15. Interviews start at 1:00 p.m. Hand-carry your resumé with your 2x2 color pic. Our office is located at UNIT LG-7, Cityland Pioneer Condominium Pioneer Street, Mandaluyong City.

PROMOTIONAL PRODUCT COMPANY

IS IN NEED OF THE FOLLOWING:

GRAPHIC ARTIST
- with experience in Corel/Photoshop

CONCEPT ARTIST
- with experience in promotional items

MULTIMEDIA ARTIST
- with experience in 3D animation

ACCOUNT REPRESENTATIVE
- female
- at least one (1) year experience

938-7349 / 938-7369 / 937-0924 / 937-9218
Look for: VOI, WARREN, ILYN

HEALTH SUPERVISORS
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I NEED 20 PTS.
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FOR THAILAND CONVENTION
APRIL 2002
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pageshop Graphic Design Studio

JUNIOR ARTIST NEEDED

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•look for yeng for portfolio presentation

IMMEDIATE JOB OPENING

Accounting Clerks

Female preferably with 2-3 years experience in various accounting/manufacturing systems (new graduates are also welcome)

Please call during office hours at Tel. No. 8071819 or come for interview with resumé/TR at CPII Comp. Km. 21 West Service Road, SSH Cupang, Muntinlupa City (Behind Coca-Cola Cupang Sales Office)

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Sabiniana Bernal

January 31, 1921 - March 6, 2002

*Peacefully joined her Creator and her dearly departed husband **SIA DEN TEE**, at the age of 81.*

Her body lies in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

She will be brought to her final resting place at the Chinese Cemetery on Sunday, March 17, 2002 at 9:00 AM.

We, her children **SY HA** (†), **CHONG CHO** & **JULIA CHUA**, **BEN** & **CELIA LIM**, **FERNANDO** (†), **DIOSDADO** (†) & **REMEDIOS**, **FORTUNATO** (†) & **ROSA**, **BIENVENIDO**, **ROSE**, **CLARO** & **LINGLING**, **NORMITA** together with her grandchildren and great grandchildren request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

The Sisters of St. Paul of Chartres
of the Philippine Province

request your prayers for

MOTHER MARIE MADELEINE DENOGA, SPC,

First Filipino Provincial Superior,
who returned to her Creator, Savior, and Spouse
on March 8, 2002 at the Manila Doctors' Hospital

WAKE : March 9, 2002 (whole day)
SPC Vigil House
Third Street, New Manila

March 10, 2002 (whole day)
Our Lady of Chartres Convent
Antipolo City

Necrological rites start at 8:30 a.m., Monday, March 11, 2002 to be followed by the Funeral Mass and burial at the Garden of Peace of Our Lady of Chartres Convent, Antipolo City.

METRODORA C. CORPUZ

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on March 8, 2002 at the age of 81.

Her bereaved husband **Col. Marcelino R. Corpuz** (Ret.);
children and in-laws **Chit** and **Boy Angeles**; **Dindo** and **Malen Conanan**;
Noli and **Bot Baaco**; **Mon** and **Vickie Angco**; **Benjie**;
Florie and **Ed Milia**; and **Mike** and **Nina Leaño**,
grandchildren **Heidi** and **Jun-Jun Angeles**; **Philip** and **Gizmo**;
Lissa, **Bombol**, **Obet**, **Teni** and **Diane**; **Balong** and **Adrian**;
Tintin and **Trisha Milla**; **Patrick** and **Mikee**;
brother **Onofre** and sister **Zaida** and all relatives and friends
request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Interment will be on March 12, 2002 at the Himlayang Pilipino
after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at La Funeraria Paz, Chapel-7,
G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
Matthew 10:39

Our Dear Mama Puring

Purificacion Abaya Col-long

Has peacefully joined our Creator on March 1, 2002 at Hollywood Prebysterian Hospital, Los Angeles, California. She was 75 years old.

Together with our loving Daddy, **Atty. Bienvenido Pacquing Col-long**, we her children **Caesar** & **Lyn**, **Napy** & **Mimi**, **Alexander** (†), **Ricky** & **Olive**, **Chris** & **Jackie**; her grandchildren **Rochelle**, **Kristine**, **Lorraine**, **Jaymee**, **Jojo**, **Chloe**, **Aldrin**, **Erica** (†), **Joma**, **Micay**, **Rara** & **Charlene**, brother and sisters and other relatives request you to pray for her eternal journey with our Lord.

Her remains lie in state at A & B, Loyola Memorial Chapel Marikina where she shall await your final goodbyes until Wednesday, March 13, 2002. Interment will be at Loyola Memorial Park Marikina after the 2 p.m. Mass.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...

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❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
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FREE OBIT DESIGN

WILLIAM SMITH WARNE

January 28, 1929 - March 8, 2002

Peacefully joined his Creator.

His body now lies at
Don Bosco Chapel of Hope, Makati City.
He will be brought to his final resting place at
Makati South Cemetery.
Date to be announced later.

WE, the family of the departed request the pious readers to pray for the repose of his soul.

ENGR. NESTOR OSIAS MONTERO, SR.

of Villasis, Pangasinan and Quezon City

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on March 6, 2002 at the age of 92.

His bereaved children **Josefina**, **Estrella**, **Moseshill** and **Asuncion**; son and daughter-in-laws, grandchildren, great grandchildren and other relatives request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at La Funeraria Paz, Ground Floor, Chapel C-1, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, March 10, 2002 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 9:00 AM Mass at La Funeraria Paz.

"The Lord is my shepherd. I have everything I need. He lets me rest in the green meadows.
... Surely His goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life and I will live in the house of the Lord forever."

Roberto Pines Mora

Born April 16, 1940 has now peacefully joined the Creator on March 7, 2002 at the age of 61.

His bereaved wife Horiana; children Rose and Raymond; son-in-law Lito Lopez and granddaughter Ross Angel Lopez together with sister Jasmine; brothers Arturio and Victoriano Jr.; supportive relatives and friends request the kind readers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Marian Memorial Chapels, Marcos Highway, Antipolo City. Tel. Nos. 645-1845/55.

Interment will be on Tuesday, March 12, 2002 after the 8:00 A.M. Holy Mass.

Message of Thanks

With deep gratitude and appreciation, we thank all of you who were with us, remembered us in prayers, sent messages of sympathy, offered Masses, gave donations, sent flowers, visited and kept vigil, attended the funeral rites and days of prayer and who, in countless and immeasurable ways, condoled with and comforted us in our moment of grief.

May the knowledge that **Charito/Tita Ne** is now in the warm embrace of our Loving Father fill us with peace and renewed faith.

The family of the late

ROSARIO ALIKPALA GAA

(†) 21 February 2002

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."
John 3:16

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City, Tels 372-5084, 410-9236 87
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1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila; Tels. 522-8846; 522-9438, 400-5394

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

NOTICE OF BIDDING

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be accepting sealed offers for the Sale thru Market Determined Pricing 2,550 MT (51,000 BAGS) more or less Calrose Rice Variety, Grade No. 1, at the indicative price of:

a. Ex-Warehouse Php P20.40/kg or P1,020/bag

on March 15 and 21, 2002 at 10:00 AM at the NFA Penthouse, 101 Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City.

A pre-bidding conference shall be held on March 13 and 19, 2002 at 10:00 AM at the NFA Penthouse. In the pre-auction, interested bidders shall bring the following:

a. Original and xerox copy of NFA license (retailing, wholesaling).
b. Duly notarized authorization from the owner, partner, chairman or president that he or she is authorized to represent the business entity in the pre-auction, auction proper and all activities thereto.

All interested bidders shall submit a bid bond equivalent to 5% of the total bid price in the form of cash, Cashier's Check or Manager's Check from any reputable banks in Metro Manila.

Interested bidders may secure the terms and conditions starting March 12, 2002 at DMO OCD, 5th floor from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM. For any inquiries, please call Tel. Nos. 712-15-72 and 712-17-08.

Bidding documents will be available on March 13, 2002 to qualified bidders/offerors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00. In case of bidding failure, a pre-bidding/re-bidding shall be conducted at 10:00 AM at NFA Boardroom on March 19, 2002 and 21, 2002, respectively.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality thereof, and to accept only such bids that are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **ANTHONY R. A. ABAD**
Administrator

(PDI--Mar. 10 & 11, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL DAIRY AUTHORITY
NDA Bldg. BAI Compound, Visayas Avenue
1100 Diliman, Quezon City, Philippines
Tel. (632) 926-0733 to 36 / 929-6755 / 929-0253 / 929-8749
Telefax: (632) 926-8847 / E-mail: buhaynda@mail.com

INVITATION TO BID

The NATIONAL DAIRY AUTHORITY (NDA), a government-owned and controlled corporation attached to the Department of Agriculture (DA), invites interested bidders to submit sealed written tenders for:

500,000 pcs. **RETORTABLE ALUMINUM MILK POUCH with the following specifications:**

Size:	**100 MM(w) x 170 MM(l) x 28 MM (BG)**
Material Comp:	**PET 12/AL 7/NY 15/R-CP P60**
With Print:	**Full Color (5-6 colors)**

For purposes of clarifying issues re specifications, and terms & conditions, a prebid conference will be held on **March 18, 2002** at **10:00 A.M.** at the Shahani-Acosta Conference Room, NDA Building, BAI Compound, Visayas Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

Sealed bids in two (2) sets shall be received by the Pre-Bid and Awards Committee at the above address not later than **10:00 A.M.** on **March 25, 2002** and shall then be publicly opened immediately thereafter. All bids must be accompanied by a bid bond equivalent to 3% of the bid amount in the form of cash, cashier's/manager's check or GSIS guarantee bond issued in favor of NDA. All bidders are also required to submit together with the bid documents, an authenticated copy of their business license/registration, latest audited financial statements (Balance Sheet and Income Statements), latest income tax return (original to be shown for authentication purposes) and a copy of the organization's profile.

NDA reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any information therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to NDA.

(Sgd.) **SALVACION M. BULATAO**
Administrator

(PDI--Mar. 10 & 17, 2002)

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AT: DMCI - Wella Compound, West Service Road, Merville, Paranaque City
ON: Friday 15th March (and if required) Saturday 16th March 2002 - 10:30am Prompt
ON VIEW: Thursday 14th March 2002, 9:00am - 5:00pm & Morning of Sale Day
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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Fernando Victorino

Eddie Bernardo

The following personnel are no longer connected with **FOXCHIT SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS**, because there services were terminated as of February 14, 2002, for rendering unauthorized services and for failure to remit company funds. Hence, any transaction done by these personnel after their termination or done without the knowledge of the company will not be covered by the usually warranty of the company.

(PDI - March 10, 2002)

Street Marketing

INVITATION FOR QUALIFICATION AND BID

The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of this loan to eligible payment under the contract for which this Invitation for Qualification and Bid is issued.

The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission as the Executing Agency and the City Government of Pasig as the Implementing Agency are inviting CONTRACTORS to apply for Qualification and Bid for the following project.

Name of Project : Barangay Pineda Linear Park
Duration : 180 Calendar Days

Contract Package	Area	Location	Project Description
a. Barangay Pineda Linear Park	Approximately 12,465.00 sqm.	Barangay Pineda, Pasig City	Community Park and Promenade (landscaping, civil, drainage and electrical works)

Interested contractors will be required to submit their accomplished qualification documents and bid proposals at the same time in two (2) separate sealed envelopes. The envelope containing the bid will be kept in a sealed box which will not be opened until after the completion of the qualification evaluation and the list of qualified contractors has been finalized. Only the bids of qualified contractors will be opened on the date of bid opening. The bids of disqualified contractors will be returned unopened.

Interested contractors may obtain further information and secure the qualification and bid documents at the following address:

Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC)
Second Floor, Engineering Building
MWSS CMPD., Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Telephone Nos. 433-3444; 433-3446, 926-5233; 926-5234

A complete set of qualification and bid documents may be purchased by interested contractors from the above address starting 11-15 March 2002 upon submission of a letter of intent and payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (Php 5,000.00).

Site Inspection and Pre-Bid Conference is on 22 March 2002, 10:00 a.m. at the Conference Room, PRRC office. The accomplished qualification documents and the bid in two (2) separate sealed envelopes must be submitted to the PRRC on or before 1200 hours on 22 April 2002. The date of bid opening will be announced later.

The contractors shall submit together with qualification documents a notarized sworn statement stating their project workload as of date of bidding including newly awarded but not yet started contracts with corresponding contract amount

All particulars relative to Prequalification, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract shall be governed by the ADB Procurement Guidelines and other pertinent laws and regulations. The BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive minor informalities, or accept such bids which will be the most advantageous to the government. The decision of BAC is final and binding.

(Sgd.) BINGLE H.B. GUTIERREZ
Executive Director

(PDI -- Mar. 2, 3 & 10, 2002)

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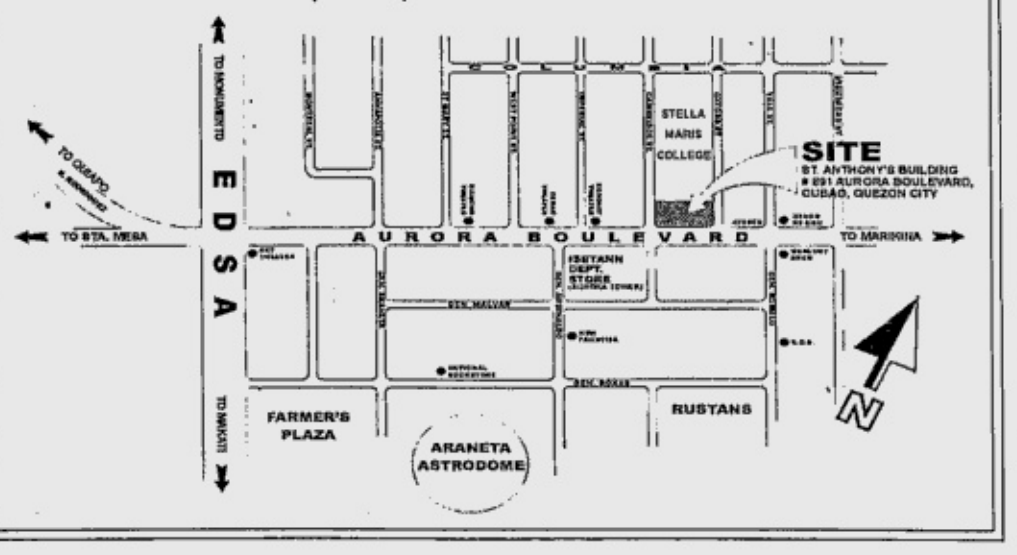

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

A presumption of death of JUANA CHUA, born on 27 January 1942 in Pasig, Rizal (now Pasig City), has been filed in the Diocesan Matrimonial Tribunal of Lucena by her spouse, CONRADO TAN.

Anyone who has knowledge of her whereabouts or any information as to what might have happened to her is requested to call or write:

THE JUDICIAL VICAR
P.O. Box 60
Lucena City
Tel. # (042) 660-3483

(PDI--Mar. 8, 9 & 10, 2002)

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Amadeo S. Cruz	Transportation Engineer	850-7901 loc. 420

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Tel. No. (033) 337-3120/337-6018
Mr. Jim Feliciano
309 Ledesma Street, Iloilo City
Tel. No. (033) 508-2530
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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS
METROSTAR EXPRESS

INVITATION TO BID

The DOTC-MRT 3 Bids and Awards Committee invites all interested bidders/suppliers to prequalify and bid for the supply, delivery and installation for the **FURNISHINGS FOR THE MRT 3 CONFERENCE ROOM Projects** with a total approved budget amounting to Php 905,047.00.

Accreditation requirements can be obtained upon payment of non-refundable fee of P100.00 to the Administrative Division, DOTC-MRT 3 Depot, North Avenue cor. EDSA, North Triangle Area, Quezon City. Submission of duly accomplished and notarized pre-qualification documents shall not be later than 5:00 p.m., **15th March 2002**. Accredited/ pre-qualified bidders/suppliers need not apply.

Bid documents and complete specifications are available for issuance upon payment of P500.00, which is not refundable, and upon presentation of Notice of Invitation and Certificate of Accreditation.

The DOTC-MRT 3 reserves the right to reject any or all of the bids proposals without offering any reason, waive any informality therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the government. This office, likewise, assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids nor does it guarantee that an award shall be made.

(Sgd.) **MARIO C. MIRANDA**
Acting General Manager
Metrostar Express, and
Chairman, PBAC

(PDI - March 4, 5 & 10, 2002)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 2002

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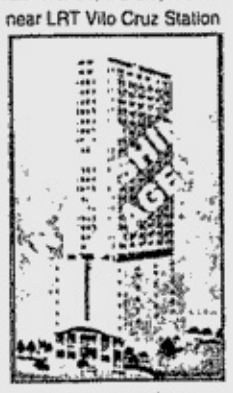

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RESIDENTIAL

QUEZON CITY

1 Res.T'house-2BR,2TB Unit 1-G, Don Damaso T'homes, Damaso St., Don Antonio Hgts., QC *(Expiry of Redemption May 2, 2002) LA 34.6 / FA 57 **Min.Bid-P900,000**

MANDALUYONG

2 Res. Condo-Bare Unit Unit 2002-B, 20th Flr., Wack-Wack Tower, Wack-Wack Road *(Expiry of Redemption June 14, 2002) FA 154.88 / PKG **Min.Bid-P6,200,000**

PARANAQUE

3 Res. T'house-2BR,1TB Lot 1-C,Peter T'house, Peter cor Rogationist Sts, Multinational Vill. *(Expiry of Redemption May 2, 2002) LA 47.3 / FA 77.56 **Min.Bid-P900,000**

SAN JUAN

4 Res'l. Condo. 2BR, 2TB, w/ pkg/ Unit 1203 Platinum 2000, Annapolis St., G'hills FA 113.6 / PKG 12.6 **Min. Bid -P4,640,000**

NEAR BLUE RIDGE, Q.C.

5 Res'l H&L- 1-sty. W/ 3BR, 4TB, & gar. #117 Aquarius St., Cinco Hermanos LA 700 / FA 405 **Min.Bid-P9,640,000**

6 Res.Bldg-2-sty. w/ pool pelota court /117 Aquarius St., Cinco Hermanos Subd., Calumpang LA 700 / FA 413 **Min. Bid -P9,170,000**

BULACAN

7 Res. H&L- 3BR,2TB, w/ garage / L35 B16 Kansas St., Ciudad Grande North, Ph-II, Lawa, Meycauayan LA 120 / FA 85 **Min.Bid-P1,010,000**

8 Res'l. Apartment 5 door, 1TB each 725 Sitio Matang Tubig, Lote, Barrio Guyong, Sta. Maria LA 150 / FA 150 **Min. Bid -P1,081,000**

KALOOKAN

32 Comm'l Warehouse 2 storey / #428-10th Avenue, Grace Park LA 480 / FA 847 **Min. Bid -P8,080,000**

33 Comm'l Bldg. -3 sty. w/ Mezz. & Roofdeck 84-4th St, Grace Park LA 650 / FA 1,925 **Min.Bid-P18,260,000**

MANILA

34 Lot w/ whouse & office Interior R. Alunan St., Malate, Pasay NLA-1,381.9 FA-772.3 **Min.Bid-P35,000,000**

35 Comm'l space (Entire 2/F) 2/F KP Tower,C.M. Recto corner Juan Luna Sts., Binondo FA 658 **Min.Bid-P25,920,000**

*All properties for sale *Uncertain as at any time

VALENZUELA

9 Res'l H&L - 1sty / L11 B4, 23 St. Prince Sam Villa Subd., Malinta LA 152 **Min.Bid-P1,720,000**

CAINTA

10 T'house - 2BR, 2TB, w/ attic & gar. L6-a B3, 3rd St., Gruar Subdivision LA 95 **Min.Bid-P880,000**

11 T'house - 2BR,2TB / Unit C, 3rd St., Gruar Subdivision, LA 36 / FA 60 **Min.Bid-P600,000**

CAVITE

12 Res. T'house -2sty L1 B23, Alicante St., Town&Country West, Molino, Bacoor LA 56 / FA 57.57 **Min. Bid -P900,000**

13 Res'l Lot -(Fairway) L31 B30, Orchard Res'l Estate & Golf & Country Club, Dasma LA 656 **Min. Bid -P3,265,000**

14 Res'l Lot -(Non-F'way) L49 B37, Orchard Res'l Estate & Golf & Country Club, Dasma LA 784 **Min. Bid -P2,352,000**

15 Res'l Lot -(Non-F'way) L35 B37, Orchard Res'l Estate & Golf & Country Club, Dasma LA 667 **Min. Bid -P2,061,000**

16 Res'l Lot (Non-Fairway) / L9 B54 Orchard Res'l Estate & Golf & Country Club, Dasmariñas LA 388 **Min.Bid-P1,165,000**

17 Res'l Lot (Non-Fairway) / L3 B53 Orchard Res'l Estate Club, Dasmariñas LA 478 **Min.Bid-P1,435,000**

18 Res.Lot-(Fairway) L17-B10, Orchard Res.Estate Golf CountryClub, Dasma LA 1,034 **Min.Bid-P3,930,000**

COMMERCIAL

MANILA

36 Office Unit / Unit 1212 &1214/EspanaTowers Sampaloc / TFA 44 **Min.Bid-P1,656,000**

QUEZON CITY

37 Comm.Lot w/ whouse 185 Roosevelt Ave., SFDel Monte, QC TLA 5,641 **Min.Bid-P205,000,000**

38 Ind'l Lots - 6 lots/ Bgy. Nagkaisang Nayon TLA 34,045 **Min.Bid-P98,670,000**

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19 Res. T'house-2sty, 2BR,1TB / L4 B4, Voltes V St, Mariz T'homes, San jose LA 51 / FA 47.7 **Min.Bid-P685,000**

20 Vacant Lot - L21 B2 Provincial Road cor Maguey St., Our Lady Fatima VI LA 230 **Min.Bid-P414,000**

NUEVA ECIJA

21 Comm/Res. Lot w/ Ice Plant - Castellano, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija TLA 5,000 **Min.Bid-P1,705,000**

BULACAN, Sta. Maria

22 Res.H&L-2BR,1TB B1 L12, Sunrays Vill., Bgy.Guyong, Sta.Maria LA 72 / FA 30 **Min.Bid-P230,000**

23 Res.H&L-2BR,1TB B1 L14, Sunrays Vill., LA 74 / FA 30 **Min.Bid-P233,000**

24 Res.H&L-2BR,1TB B1 L15, Sunrays Vill., LA 75 / FA 30 **Min.Bid-P235,000**

25 Rowhouse-1BR,1TB B5 L2, Sunrays Vill., LA 40 / FA 24 **Min.Bid-P145,000**

26 Rowhouse-1BR,1TB B5 L3, Sunrays Vill., LA 40 / FA 24 **Min.Bid-P145,000**

27 Res H&L-2BR,1TB B3 L6, Sunrays Vill., LA 70 / FA 30 **Min.Bid-P224,000**

28 Res.H&L-2BR,1TB B3 L8, Sunrays Vill., LA 70 / FA 30 **Min.Bid-P224,000**

29 Res. Lot - B1 L13 SunraysVill / LA 73 **Min.Bid-P105,000**

30 Res. Lot -B2 L2 Sunrays Vill. / LA 70 **Min.Bid-P105,000**

TARLAC

31 Res'l Lot / L28 B5 Gardenia St., Capital Garden Subd., Tarlac LA 300 **Min.Bid-P292,000**

QUEZON CITY

39 Comm / Res Bldg-4sty Unfinished / 394-A Sangandaan, Nova LA 218 / FA 721 **Min.Bid-P4,800,000**

VALENZUELA

40 Ind'l Lots-8 lots /Brgy. Maysan, Valenzuela TLA 15,506 **Min.Bid-P10,340,000**

41 Ind'l Lot-Brgy.Maysan Valenzuela LA 11,457 **Min.Bid-P7,460,000**

42 Ind'l Lot - Brgy. Lingunan, Valenzuela LA 7,841 **Min.Bid-P5,230,000**

BULACAN

43 Ind'l. Lots-(9 Lots) Lots1B6A to 6G, 1B1B/1B5, Bahay Pare Bagbaguin,Meycauayan TLA 9,975 **Min.Bid-P24,000,000**

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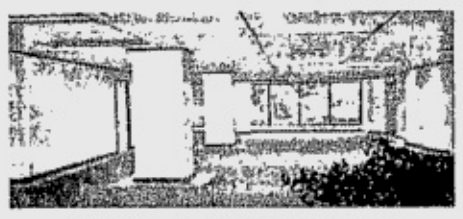

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Floor Area: 397.86 sq.m.

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Mamplasan, Biñan, Laguna
Floor Area: 480 sq.m.

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LIPA BATANGAS
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ORCHARD FAIRWAY LOT - 705 sq.m.
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Makati - 97.38 sq.m.
2BR 1 parking

ANTEL SEAVIEW - Tower C
Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City
3BR 147.08 sq.m. 2 parking

ASIA TOWER CONDO - Makati
Unit 2401 - 1 BR 78.1 sq.m. 1 parking

ASIA TOWER CONDO - Makati
Unit 2411 - 2BR 76.4 sq.m. 1 parking

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Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Wilfredo R. Villegas has been extra-judicially settled by his heirs as per doc 4 page 1 book VIII series of 2001 bef. not. pub. Eddie Fernandez of the city of Mandaluyong (PDI-Mar. 3,10, & 17 2002)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late GUILLERMO M. SERVANO JR. has been extra-judicially settled among his heirs under Doc. No. 366, Page No. 75, Book No. 01, Series of 2002, before Notary Public, Florencio Macalsip of Pasig City *(PDI-March 3, 10 & 17, 2002)*

PERSONAL

MAY THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS be adored, glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world, now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us. Saint Jude, worker of miracles, pray for us. Saint Jude, helper of the hopeless, pray for us. Amen. Say this prayer nine times a day, by the ninth day, your prayer will be answered. It has never been known to fail. Publication must be promised. -JM

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT
Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my Ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.

MAKE A CAREER CHOICE ONLINE.

SundayBIZ

34 doctors, 4 businessmen get vital lifeline from banks

PREMIERE General aims to be the best outside Metro Manila.

By Myrna Rodriguez-Co

CABANATUAN CITY—The Logo of Premiere General Hospital of Nueva Ecija Inc. has 34 loops in it. These stand for the 30 doctors and four businessmen who, in 1995, got together—against many odds—to put up the "most complete and most modern hospital outside Metro Manila."

If Premiere Hospital is not yet quite what it wants to be, it is at least getting close to it. Inaugurated this January was its MRI scan unit, the first of its kind in northeast Luzon. The hospital also boasts of other state-of-the-art facilities that are hard to find even in big hospitals in Metro Manila.

HOSPITAL administrator Lynn Balania with a client

First class facilities

Name it, Premiere Hospital is likely to have it: A CT scan with laser printer, 2D/3D echocardiography, a video endoscopic system, hemodialysis machines, arterial blood gas, the latest in X-ray, fluoroscopy, ultrasound and mammography, endoscopy and bronchoscopy facilities, and more. It even has a blood bank and a psychiatric ward.

Today's bullish outlook for Premiere Hospital belies a roller-coaster history of ups and downs.

"For three years, mostly downs," Dr. Reynaldo Yang, president, qualifies. The boyish-looking doctor smiles as he recounts how he and other doctors almost bit the dust in the early years they were struggling to get on their feet.

A shaky start

Dr. Yang was 37 years old, a consultant at a well-established hospital in the city, the day he was contemplating his future. In that hospital, where he had served for seven years, he had figured in an internal feud, a long drawn out one.

He brooded as he weighed his options. Staying put was untenable. Going abroad was out of the question. He wanted no part of the "brain drain."

Joining a hospital in Manila was an option—but he preferred practicing in his native Nueva Ecija. In the end, he decided to attempt what was thought then to be a long shot—to put up a new hospital.

Before long, he had drawn a concept of the project with wife, Sylvia, also a doctor, and brother Conrado, a businessman.

In a few months, the trio had convinced 13 other practicing doctors and three other prominent Novo Ecijanos to join in. They first considered forming a doctors' cooperative, but before it was registered, most of the doctors had backed out.

It was too risky, too much of a wild shot, they must have imagined.

Back to square one, the persistent Dr. Yang began recruiting all over again. This time, it was the parents of young residents and consultants that he wooed. He shared with them his vision of a pre-eminent hospital in Nueva Ecija where patients from as far as Tuguegarao would obtain first-class diagnostics and treatment rather than travel to Metro Manila.

In 1995, Drs. Reynaldo and Sylvia Yang had all the medical practitioners and other investors required to form a corporation.

Hospitals are of three levels: primary, secondary and tertiary. Each has its own market niche. Premiere dared to begin at the highest level. As a tertiary hospital, it put itself up against two much older, more established institutions in Cabanatuan City.

Losing battle

It looked like a losing battle for a modicum share of the market for Premiere Hospital for all of three years. Dr. Yang explains that it takes that long for a hospital to get accredited with PhilHealth.

"We were always willing to waive our professional fees, but that was not enough to make up for the discounts patients would otherwise enjoy from PhilHealth coverage, which we did not have," he said.

Those days, it was not only professional fees they had to forego. Their salary rates were a shame. Plush offices, representation allowances, 13th month pay, dividends—such perks seemed unreachable as the moon.

"Four of us were sharing a cubicle. Board meetings were being held in homes of members and Jollibee meals were being served!" Yang recalls.

Building on credit

Despite these reverses, the Yangs and his group of 34 doctors and investors did not waver in their vision of making Premiere No. 1 in their part of the country. They began laying the basic infrastructure for achieving this goal: a spacious and soundly built hospital building and good facilities.

Construction began in 1996 with a loan from a consortium of private commercial banks, Lynn Balaria, then corporate treasurer, now hospital administrator, recalls. Later, the loan was assumed by a government credit program, which offered easier terms for Premiere.

EU competition changes won't quiet critics

BRUSSELS—European Union competition authorities are under fire from governments, industry and the legal profession just as they ready major personnel changes and new rules affecting companies worldwide.

By year's end, the European Commission's Competition directorate will replace its Top 3 civil servants, alter its cartel rules to increase the role of national courts and be hard at work revamping its controversial merger rules.

But critics inside the EU and beyond say the changes fall short of the mark or miss it entirely.

Politicians such as French Finance Minister Laurent Fabius and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder have publicly blasted the Commission, and competition lawyers regularly complain about its unchecked power to block mergers.

The Commission is no stranger to criticism from those who don't like its decisions, and competition policy is arguably its most visible supranational power.

US President George W. Bush excoriated Brussels last year for rejecting General Electric's proposed purchase of Honeywell International, arguing Competition Commissioner Mario Monti did not treat US corporations fairly.

The Commission is now investigating American software giant Microsoft. Whatever it decides, it is bound to offend someone.

EU governments critical

In recent months, some EU governments have argued that European firms are getting the short end of the stick.

A prime example was Monti's decision to reject Schneider Electric's acquisition of rival Legrand in France, opening the door for a possible purchase by GE.

"What use is it to stop the merger of two European companies if the result is that one or the other can be purchased by a non-European?" Fabius complained in a speech on competition policy last month in Paris.

Monti, echoing a first principle of antitrust regulators worldwide, retorted that competition policy could not discriminate between European and foreign firms.

Schroeder chose an Opel car plant as his venue to attack new auto distribution rules proposed by Monti, which the German leader said would cost jobs in the automobile industry.

Apart from perceived threats to jobs and European industrial champions, left-of-centre EU politicians also chafe at Brussels' ability to constrain them from pursuing a pro-active industrial policy and giving state aid to business.

Some also question proposals to increase the Commission's powers to conduct raids in its investigations of price fixing.

Competition lawyers have a different set of grievances, arguing that companies should be able to seek a quicker court review of merger decisions.

Monti says his goal is to help create a single market that gives consumers a better deal and European business a competitive edge on the world market.

"When competitive forces are at play, producers make greater efforts to attract customers by offering them lower prices, higher quality and better service," he said last month.

A Commission official was blunter about recent political criticism: "Turning down mergers is unpopular. They are in election time and we are always a welcome scapegoat."

Monti listening

But Monti, an economics professor rather than a politician, listens to criticism and the Commission will undergo major changes, including one he did not instigate.

New policies requiring rotation of senior staff across the Commission will force out competition director general Alexander Schaub and his deputies, Jean-Francois Pons and Gianfranco Rocca. A third deputy will soon be added.

Monti will pick the new director general. The front runners, all British, are John Mogg, the internal markets director general, Philip Lowe, chief of staff to Internal Reform commissioner Neil Kinnock, and Jonathan Faull, director general of Press and Communications and the chief commission spokesperson.

Mogg is best known for his administrative experience, Lowe and Faull for their knowledge of antitrust policy. The successful candidate, who may be none of the above, will have a major say in framing the questions that Monti will decide.

The new director general will shepherd the proposed new cartel-busting antitrust powers and shape the new merger rules.

Private lawsuits

The antitrust changes, likely to be approved by year's end, would allow national courts to enforce EU anti-cartel law, opening the door to more private lawsuits. Medium-sized companies could use the courts better to protect their rights, as firms do in the United States.

Proposed merger changes, still at an earlier stage, would allow companies to send their merger reviews to Brussels if they otherwise would have to file in three or more member countries. Companies like that, but member states are less enthusiastic.

Firms would be able to seek more time—two to four weeks—at critical junctures in the merger review to work out solutions to competitive problems raised by the commission.

But some competition lawyers say the proposed changes fail to address their most serious concern—the absence of timely judicial review.

Years of delay mean that court victories have come too late to save mergers. But that may change, even without new rules.

This year the Court of First Instance in Luxembourg granted Tetra Laval Group's request for a "fast track" review of its merger with Sidel, rejected by the Commission.

Tetra Laval could a get decision within six to 12 months. If it wins, it could keep Sidel, which it already owns.

That would be the first time a court had effectively overturned a Commission merger decision.

Reuters

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Sunday LIFESTYLE

Chelo Banal-Formoso, Editor

Queenless *and* winless *for a generation*

Not a few wonder why a country famed for its beautiful women hasn't won a major beauty crown in 23 years

STORY ON PAGE C4

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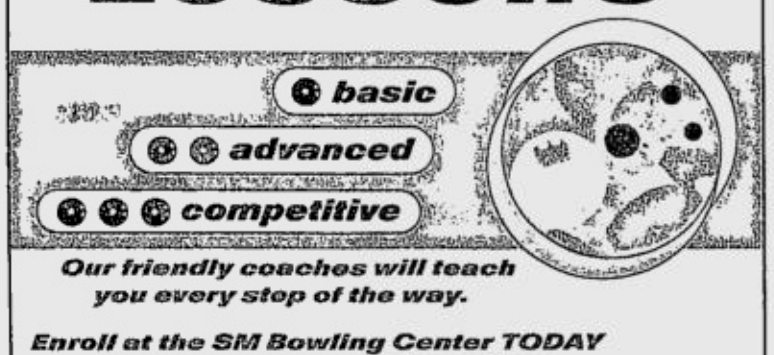

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Spanish chamber orchestra wows audiences

CEBU CEBU

Jaime Picornell

MORE than 500 music enthusiasts filled the ballroom of Casino Español de Cebu for the performance of La Orquesta de Camara de El Ampurdan, brought from Spain by Instituto Cervantes and Agencia Española de Cooperacion Internacional.

Anticipation for the world-class chamber orchestra has been mounting for many weeks now, especially for the Arts Council for this was a climax to a year-long calendar of events. President **Petite Garcia** was on top of it, as were the event's energetic chair **Vivina Chiu Yrastorza**, and **Fe Sala Villarica**, the Arts Council's founder, for whom this was a nostalgic occasion. She was born in Barcelona, Cataluña, and the Ampurdan region in Spain happens to be there.

Javier Galvan, director of Instituto Cervantes in Manila, came ahead of the group which came in two batches from Kuala Lumpur. On the night of the concert, he gave an intro on the orchestra, a group he has known for quite a while, having been with them when they performed in Manila during the 1998 Centennial events, and when they went to Guam, Saipan, and other idyllic isles in the Pacific where Spanish vestiges remain—and are preserved—to this day. **Vikki Hermosisima** announced the entrance of the chamber orchestra's members who comprise a mini United Nations. Concert master **Chris Nichols** is English; violin soloist **Huei Chiang**, Chinese (Taiwan); **Eugeni** and **Tatyana Kleiner**, Russian; **Massimo Mameli** and **Giulia Renzi**, Italian; **Ivailo Deckhoff**, Bulgarian; and **Tigran Yeritsyan**, Armenian.

Rafael Dengra is of Argentinean descent, while the rest are Spanish, or as they prefer to be called, Catalan: **Carles Coll Jr.**, **Antoni Mallol** and **Josefina Bonet** who definitely make very fine music together. Great applause was given as they filed in and took their seats beneath those gleaming chandeliers.

CEBU Arts Council's Petite Garcia and Clint Escaño

Applause was even louder when conductor Carles Coll appeared, and greeted the audience. He had a tender look for his wife **Maria Bardes de Coll**, seated beside **Milagring Borromeo** and **Amparito Lhuillier**. It was the Colls' 28th wedding anniversary, and the program was dedicated to her.

HUEI Chiang and Chris Nichols

MARIA and Carles Coll

It started with Mozart's Divertimento in F Major (Salzburg Symphony No. 5), light as a feather and done with exquisite delicacy. When told after the program that it was performed perfectly Señor Coll said, "but you see, the piece is perfect."

Then came seven Romanian dances arranged for the orchestra by **Bela Bartok**, which were brief, delightful and stunning. To close the first part, soloist Huei Chiang took everyone's breath away with Tartini's sonata in G Minor, which is also known as "The Devil's Thrill."

The music of Spain was featured in the second part. Carles Coll explained every piece, and **Javier Galvan** did the translation. First came **Joaquin Turina**'s "La Oracion del Torero," followed by Quartet in C Minor Per L'Art by Catalan composer **Eduard Toldra**, who infused a full measure of romance.

A fitting finale was Danza Española No. 1 from the opera "La Vida Breve" by **Manuel de Falla**. There was sustained applause, and there were shouts of "Bravo, Bravo, Bravisimo." The loudest seemed to come from my father, **Santiago Picornell**, seated in the front row. Strong and spry on the verge of his 90th birthday, he was singled out by Señor Coll as probably the only one in the audience who would understand him if he chose to speak in Catalan.

Such enthusiasm from the audience merited an encore. The piece chosen was "Scherzo Over Beethoven," by former Spanish ambassador to the Philippines **Delfin Colomé**, who did a playful—and genial—takeoff from Beethoven's "Fur Elise." It is very much a part of the Ampurdan Chamber Orchestra's repertoire, and it has great virtuoso moments for various violinists in the ensemble.

Señor Coll explained that their current tour was arranged by the Asia-Europe Foundation based in Singapore and which is headed by Don Delfin Colomé. Being a noted conductor and brilliant composer, Don Delfin himself conducted "Scherzo Over Beethoven" during the Singapore performance. Unable to repeat the feat in Cebu, Señor Coll said that Don Delfin sent all Cebuanos his "love and kisses."

After the performance, Casino Español hosted dinner for orchestra members. Doing the honors were officers **Manuel Sainz** (in charge of cultural events) and **Jose Mari Miranda** (house chair) with **Gema Luisa Pido** preparing an excellent menu. This was the last great cultural event to be held in Casino Español's current building, which will be demolished by June to give way to a more splendid edifice. The plan is to invite the Ampurdan Chamber Orchestra to perform when it opens two years from now.

For the orchestra members one of the most memorable experiences of their sojourn in Cebu was the master class held for one entire morning at the headquarters of the Sala Foundation with members of the Peace Philharmonic of the Philippines. Conductor and professor **Jeffrey Solares** organized it. A quartet from the orchestra performed, and then members of the PPP joined the quartet, Professor Solares included, as **Chris Nichols** conducted. The visiting artists were impressed with the PPP's prowess.

The next day, the Ampurdan Chamber Orchestra took the Asian Spirit flight to Cagayan de Oro where they were feted by **Jose Maria** and **Rafaelita** (née **Pelaez**) **Golez**. They performed to a packed ballroom at the Pryce Hotel as part of a fund-raiser to save the river that crosses Cagayan de Oro City, and returned to Cebu for a short stay awaiting their flight on Cathay Pacific to Hong Kong. Petite Garcia took the opportunity of hosting dinner for them at the Lam Hai Chinese Seafood restaurant where everyone had a ball.

TALK TO US

Is the beautiful Filipina no longer world-class?

BEN Farrales

AUGGIE Cordero

RICKY Reyes

We asked a few observers to help us solve the riddle of the missing beauty crown

EDGAR ALLAN, fashion designer

Beauty pageants have become big business with major multinational conglomerates as sponsors. Sponsors are interested in highly populated areas where their products can be widely promoted. And since the developed countries of the West are already blasé toward the idea of beauty contests, pageant organizers target their venues at highly populated developing countries or regions where beauty pageants still command wide interest.

Some densely populated developing countries like India in Asia and Venezuela in the Latin America treat beauty pageants as an important tourism tool, and back their local contests with generous government support and rigid training, So they produce the most polished candidates in all major international contests.

Political agenda can also influence pageant results. An aggressive developing country very interested in promoting its tourism industry or deodorizing its political status can mount an effective lobbying campaign to influence pageant results.

AUGGIE CORDERO, fashion designer

We don't have a finishing school to prepare our candidates way, way ahead of the major competitions. India was recently featured in Time magazine. They train their candidates so well that most of their women are entering the modeling business. Winning major beauty pageants has become such a big promotion for their country. Most of their women want to join the beauty business. Venezuela has beauty schools for their women, who are trained for the question and answer portions.

I believe our women have potential but they should be trained to speak better, carry themselves well, deal with people, fix themselves and project themselves to the audience. They should also read, read and read. They must be in the know of the current events. For me, they need to be trained at least a year or so.

BEN FARRALES, fashion designer

It's not that we've ran out of beauty contestants. But if you want to go global, you also have to base it on luck, fate and moral support. In South America, they even put up a school to train beauty candidates. But we cannot expect that in our country because the government is focused on peace and order and the economy.

Today's candidates are not that intense. And what are their dreams? Becoming another Melanie Marquez or Aurora Pijuan is not really an ideal anymore.

Another reason many girls are hesitant to join beauty tilts is that candidates are subjected to a lot of scrutiny. A beauty title is not enough to lure these girls to join. Participating in one has many setbacks—you have to give up your privacy and so many other things.

NES JARDIN, president, Cultural Center of the Philippines

Many of our beauty queens have the beauty and brains, but a lot depends on the personal preferences of judges. Also, other countries like Venezuela have taken beauty competitions seriously and even established schools to train their titleholders in all aspects.

EMMA NAVARRO, painter of female nudes and a former nude model for National Artist Jerry Elizalde Navarro

We lack preparation. Other countries send their picks only after a rigorous training not just intellectually, but they also seek the help of doctors to fix whatever imperfections they have. Our entries are not so bad. In fact, they can outdo the others in some aspects. But if they have the face and the intellect, they lack the height, or vice versa. We produce a much taller generation now. I hope we focus on their height, and let them pass the long training that they need before ever sending them.

ELMER QUINTANA, VP for special events, Backroom

My observation of major international beauty pageants point to a bias for the fair complexion types like South Americans, Venezuelans, Brazilians and Europeans, who are always in the final five or 10. Asians barely reach the final round with the exception of Miss India, who, probably because of the Indians' philosophical upbringing, tend to be more witty and eloquent over the rest.

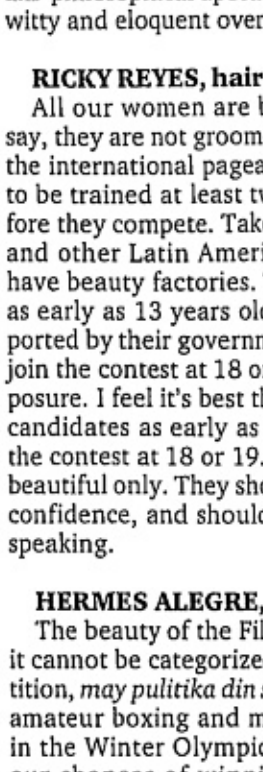
RICKY REYES, hair and beauty expert

All our women are beautiful but, sad to say, they are not groomed or trained well for the international pageant. Our women have to be trained at least two to three years before they compete. Take a look at Venezuela and other Latin American countries. They have beauty factories. They train their girls as early as 13 years old. Plus, they are supported by their government. Here, our ladies join the contest at 18 or 19 and they lack exposure. I feel it's best that we train potential candidates as early as 16 and let them join the contest at 18 or 19. It's not enough to be beautiful only. They should develop élan and confidence, and should be trained in public speaking.

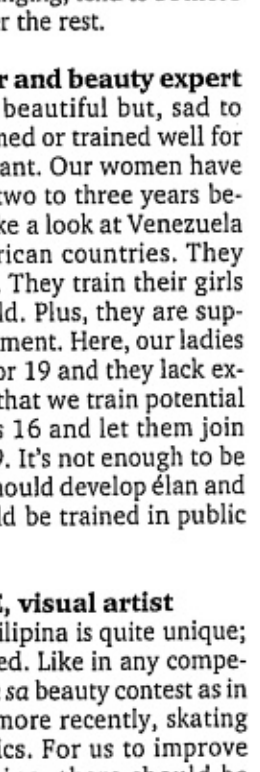
HERMES ALEGRE, visual artist

The beauty of the Filipina is quite unique; it cannot be categorized. Like in any competition, *may pulitika din sa* beauty contest as in amateur boxing and more recently, skating in the Winter Olympics. For us to improve our chances of winning, there should be more training and exposure, like the Latin American candidates. Also, we might consider having our contestants use our language: *huwag nang piliting mag*-English *kung hirap, tutal puwede namang magdala ng* interpreter.

Rowena Burgos, Vangie Baga-Reyes and Constantino Tejero



EMMA Navarro



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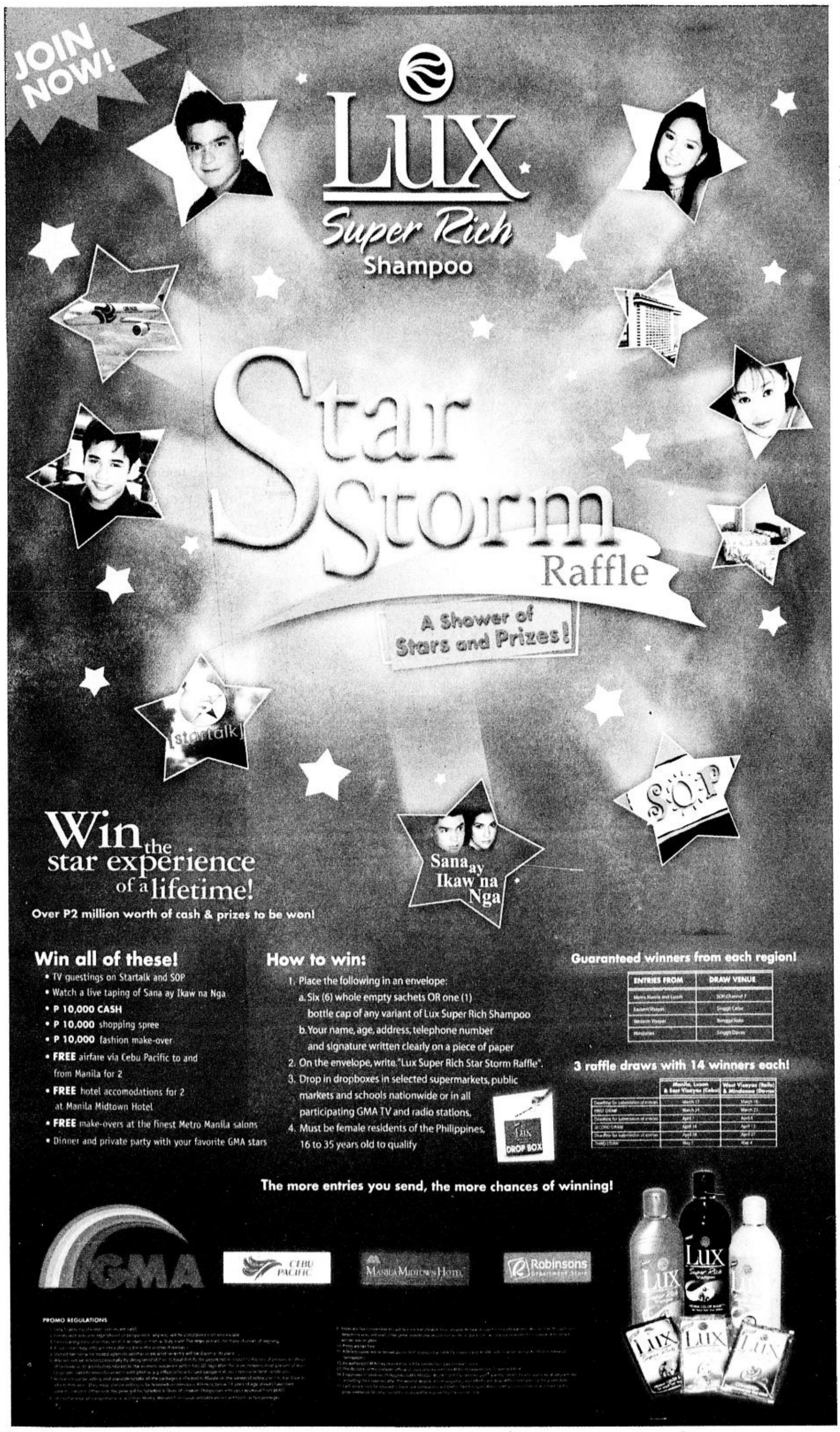
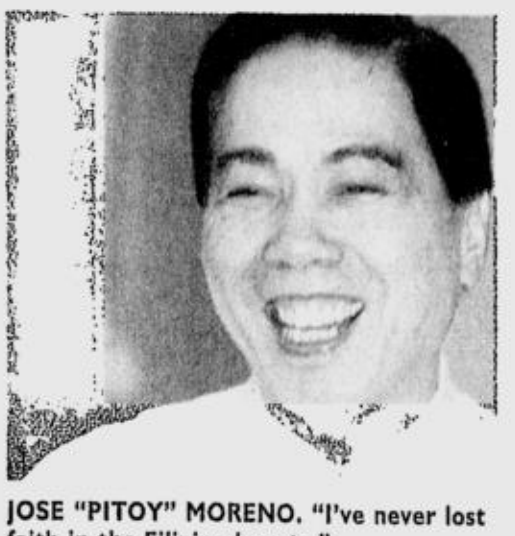


GLORIA Diaz, the 1969 Miss Universe, with her court



JOSE "PITOY" MORENO. "I've never lost faith in the Filipina beauty."

RENÉE SALUD. "You have to know the girls to determine what works for them."

VINTAGE PHOTOS FROM DORIS NUYDA'S "THE BEAUTY BOOK"

Queenless *and* winless *for a* generation

By Alex Y. Vergara

MELANIE Marquez, Miss International, 1979

WHEN was the last time a Filipina won an international beauty title? Feminists may howl in protest over such a question, but like it or not, beauty contests will remain part of Pinoy culture, much like politics, basketball, show biz and gossip. With the beauty contest season upon us again and the Bb. Pilipinas organizers crowning a new batch of beauty queens on March 16, the question is quite timely.

By international, we're not referring to the Manila-based Miss Asia-Pacific Quest or some obscure beauty pageant inspired by the earth, moon, sun and stars. We mean the big three: Miss Universe, Miss World and Miss International.

It has been—count 'em—23 years since a Filipina brought home a major crown. Melanie Marquez won Miss International in Tokyo, Japan in 1979. Before that, the Philippines produced four world-class beauty queens in less than a decade: Gemma Cruz, Miss International, 1965; Gloria Diaz, Miss Universe, 1969; Aurora Pijuan, Miss International, 1970; and Margarita "Margie" Moran, Miss Universe, 1973.

No Filipina has won the Miss World title, although three women almost made it: Pinky Amabuyok (first runner-up, 1969), Evangeline Pascual (first runner-up, 1974) and the once-controversial Ruffa Gutierrez (second runner-up, 1993).

"I've never lost faith in the beauty of the Filipina," says veteran fashion designer Pitoy Moreno. "We were like India then. Almost all our girls made it to the semifinals." As cochair of the Bb. Pilipinas Charities Inc., Moreno has been active for several decades now in the annual selection of beauty queens to be sent abroad. (Unfortunately, Stella Marquez de Araneta, founder and current chair of the Bb. Pilipinas Charities Inc., is out of the country and unavailable for interview at press time.)

Long drought

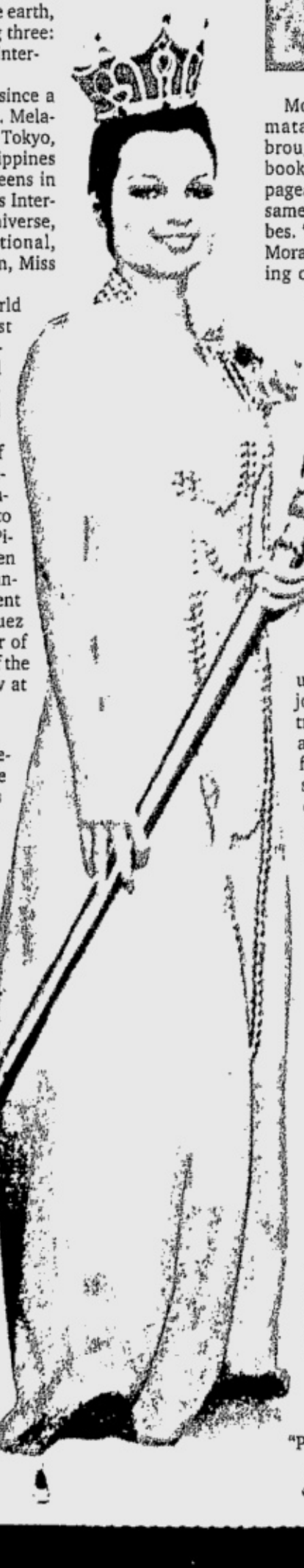
Still, a 23-year title drought is something worth looking into. Not a few are wondering why a country famed for its beautiful women hasn't produced a single international beauty queen in more than a generation now. Other countries—particularly Venezuela, Puerto Rico and, lately, India—have been winning the beauty titles that were once within easy reach of the charming and sharp Filipina.

"There's really no formula to winning," says Moran, who bested 70 or so women for the Miss Universe title in Athens, Greece. "In my case, I consider my victory providential. I really can't say why we haven't been winning lately because we've been sending some of the most beautiful women abroad."

Of course, Moran had everything going for her during her time. Photographers and the Greek press so adored her that they voted her Miss Photogenic. She immediately impressed virtually every judge except for one: legendary Spanish matador El Cordobes. But by the time of the final judging, even the skeptical Spaniard had been charmed by the Filipina, although she wouldn't know until later what changed his mind.

MARGIE MORAN. "There's really no formula to winning."

A YOUNG Margie Moran as Bb. Pilipinas Universe, 1973



Moran says she only found out about the matador's change of heart—and what brought it on—years later after she read a book on the contest written by one of the pageant's Spanish-speaking interpreters, the same woman who interpreted for El Cordobes. "Instead of speaking to him in English," Moran recalls, "I spoke to him in Spanish during our one-on-one interview. My Spanish wasn't perfect, but it managed to win him over. In the end, he was said to have voted for me."

Moran, however, didn't lose sleep preparing for the big event. Unlike Miriam Quiambao, who almost ran away with the Miss Universe crown three years ago, Moran didn't train under a "beauty magician" like Venezuelan Osmel Sousa to polish her act. "Except for my regular trips to the gym and a daily dose of current events," she says, "I hardly prepared for the contest. I was more concerned about tanning myself to look exotic."

Used to the limelight

Of course, Moran wasn't exactly unused to being in the limelight when she joined Miss Universe. The one-time actress and dancer had gained enough poise and confidence after several years of performing on stage. While still a student, she modeled clothes for Auggie Cordero, one of her mentors. Cordero designed Moran's gown for the finals, while Aureo Alonzo did her *terno*.

Moran, however, is among the few "unprepared" exceptions. Moreno underscores the importance of preparation to help boost a candidate's chances of winning. Preparation should start long before she joins a local contest, he notes, and should continue even after the title has been won.

In Venezuela, young hopefuls enter the so-called beauty schools to prepare themselves years before joining a national pageant. Reports have it that preparations include cosmetic surgery to enhance or correct certain flaws. In India, a nation of close to a billion people, beauty contests have reportedly become almost weekly events, from the biggest cities to the most remote towns.

Beauty pageants have become big business in Venezuela not only for organizers, but also for couturiers, stylists, image consultants and cosmetic surgeons. Like their Philippine counterparts, not a few Venezuelan beauties have parlayed their titles into careers in show biz, politics, media and tourism.

Government support

"Pageant organizers in Venezuela even get government support," says Moreno. "Although we're still able to get a modest number of sponsors, it's nowhere as close or as generous as the support they get in Venezuela."

In the absence of "beauty" schools in the Philippines, Moreno and company have considered holding the local competitions much earlier, possibly one or two years before they participate in international pageants to better prepare them. "But we had to abandon the idea," he says. "No woman would be willing to wait for a year or two before getting a chance at competing abroad. Filipino *pa*? We're known to enlist at the last minute. Worse, not a few winners think that everything ends once they win. It's just the first step. The main event is the pageant abroad."

The country's representative to the Miss Universe, for instance, has less than two months to prepare before competition. Although winners are virtually considered "properties" of Bb. Pilipinas, in some cases, organizers have had to compete for the women's attention after they've been crowned.

"Winners are usually swamped with invitations from friends and relatives to grace this or that affair," Moreno sighs. "In the end, they only get to spend 40 percent of their time with us."

Moreno also underscores the importance of being able to speak English well (Melanie Marquez was just lucky the Miss International tilt didn't have a stringent Q&A portion). He notes the diminishing ability of beauty contestants to express themselves in the language over the years. This has become a liability since international beauty pageants, particularly Miss Universe and Miss World, expect Filipinas to be fluent in English.

India's edge

"That has been India's edge over the Philippines in recent years," he says. "Their candidates are so eloquent in English." He adds that it is unthinkable to ask Miss Universe organizers to provide a Filipino contestant with an interpreter the way they provide interpreters for Latin American beauties.

What about cosmetic surgery? Are local organizers desperate enough now to resort to the Venezuelan formula to enhance, say, the trademark Pinoy nose? "We don't as a rule encourage women to undergo cosmetic surgery," says Moreno, "but if they feel that it will enhance their looks, we're not stopping them from having one. Filipinas, by nature, don't resort to cosmetic surgery except the *matronas*."

Fashion designer and legendary Pygmalion of many a beauty queen Renée Salud agrees: "If it will help them, why not? Cosmetic surgery is like giving a woman the right hairdo and makeup. Although in the case of Melanie and Chat (Silayan), both didn't undergo such during their time."

Good old days

The articulate Silayan, although not as striking as Marquez, almost won the Miss Universe crown, landing third runner-up in 1980. Not a few observers credited Silayan's poise for boosting her chances. The image of her gliding on stage in a strapless, off-white serpentina designed by Salud ("Mama Renée" to his pretty wards) remains etched in many a gay's memory. "Those were memorable days

QUEENLESS/ p.C5

THEN First Lady Imelda Marcos congratulates newly crowned Miss International Aurora Pijuan in 1970

Queenless and winless for a generation

From page C4

for me as well," Salud waxes nostalgic.

Aside from the two women, Salud claims to have mentored local beauty queens Dorothy Sue Bradley, Anna Lorraine Kier, Rose Anne Blas, Desiree Verdadero, Joyce Anne Burton, Sarah Jane Paez, Thea Robles, Gem Padilla, Patty Betita, Marina Benipayo, AJ Abayari, Malou Gonzales, Jennifer Fernando and even the late Maria Teresa Carlson, among others.

Bradley and Verdarero were also runners-up in their respective international contests. Salud's list doesn't include his protegees who did well in the Mutya ng Pilipinas, another prestigious local beauty pageant.

"There was a time when all major winners in Bb. Pilipinas had trained under me," says Salud, referring to the 1981 batch composed of Maricar Mendoza, Peachy Sacasas and Josephine Bautista.

Salud finds fulfillment in seeing a commoner Jane blossom into a full-fledged beauty queen. That's why he emphasizes the importance of exposure and packaging in producing a potential winner. "You have to know the girls very well," he says, "to determine what works for them. They became my friends first before I brought them to beauty contests."

Like Moreno and Ben Farrales, Salud once trained his protegees by making them model his clothes here and abroad. The experience, he says, not only enhanced their poise but also boosted their confidence. "They weren't clueless when they were sent to compete abroad. They already knew how to project and take care of themselves."

Salud speaks in the past tense because he has lost interest in helping cultivate budding beauty queens. His disinterest started during the early 1990s, and he blamed Bb. Pilipinas organizers for this. Although pageant insiders deny it, Salud has accused them of barring titleholders from wearing gowns by local designers in international tilts.

He cites the case of Jewel May Lobaton (1998 Bb. Pilipinas Universe), who was allegedly reprimanded by organizers for wearing a gown by Larry Espinosa. There's probably some truth to Salud's accusation. When we interviewed Quiambao in 1999, for instance, she said she wore a gown by Halston in the finals. We found this strange because as far as we could remember, local beauty queens traditionally wore gowns by Filipino designers.

Insulting

"They started to become strict during the time of Marina (Benipayo) and Patty (Betita)," says Salud, without referring to any particular organizer. "I don't care who gets hurt, but I find it insulting for local designers to see Filipinas wearing gowns made by foreigners." He is candid enough to admit that such global events have provided designers like him a venue to showcase their work and promote their names.

With the current policy, he says not a few couturiers have lost interest in grooming potential winners. "The poor designer is left with nothing if you deprive him of this. I'm very grateful to beauty contests, not necessarily to the organizers, because through this medium, I was able to make a name for myself. The mileage it offered was really fantastic."

When asked about the alleged policy, Moran says, "Designers go through a lot in polishing these girls. In fairness to them, they should be given an incentive by allowing their protegees to wear their gowns. It's important that you project the Filipino couturier."

But Moran sees nothing wrong in allowing a candidate to wear, say, French couture or an American-made gown straight from a Sears catalog "as long as she looks good in it."

A Bb. Pilipinas insider, who asked not to be named, admitted as much. "It doesn't matter where you get your gown as long at it works, but every item a candidate wears during the finals has to be approved by Ms Araneta. She's the expert."

This line of reasoning has proven detrimental, says Salud, who also encouraged Quiambao to join the Bb. Pilipinas after voting for her years ago in a campus beauty contest at the University of Santo Tomas. "Good for Miriam who hit upon the right look, but if we want to boost our chances of winning, we can't go on resorting to such a hit-or-miss formula."

As other countries have discovered, producing world-class beauty queens is fast becoming an exact science.

E-mail the author avergara@inquirer.com.ph

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2. Each complete text registration entitles the user to 1 trivia question and 1 raffle entry for the grand draw. The user will then be sent a multiple choice question, which he is asked to reply to with the letter corresponding to the correct answer.
3. If the user answers correctly he is given a chance to win an instant prize.
4. Instant prizes shall consist of the following:
   - Prepaid Cell Cards
   - Prepaid Internet Cards
   - Philips Earphones
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5. Apart from a chance to win an instant prize, sender also gets a chance to win in the grand draw.
6. Grand draw prizes shall consist of the following:
   - Nokia cellular phones
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   - Nike watches
   - Philips DVD players
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7. Promo period is from March 4 to June 9, 2002 and the grand draw is on June 10, 2002. The entire promo period of 13 weeks will be broken into 13 weekly sub-periods beginning every Monday at midnight and ending at 11:59 on the Sunday thereafter.
8. User shall only be allowed to win once in each sub-period. Upon qualifying for the first prize, the winner's mobile number will be blocked from winning again until the end of the particular weekly sub-period.
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10. Prizes can be claimed from Mondays to Saturdays, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM at the warehouse office of Unlimited Promotions, Inc. located at 3497 Honda St., Pinagkaisahan, Makati City with telephone number 882-33-01.
11. Winners must present the congratulatory text message along with a valid identification and an empty carton or 3 sachets of any Colgate Mintirinse variant to claim prize.
12. Winners must claim thier prizes within 60 days from receipt of the congratulatory text message; otherwise, their prizes will be forfeited in favor of Colgate-Palmolive Philippines, Inc. (CPPI) upon prior notice to BFAD.
13. The final tax on prizes worth more than P10,000.00 will be paid for by CPPI.
14. The decision of CPPI, in consultation with the BFAD representative, on any promo question shall be deemed final.
15. Prizes are non-transferable and non-convertible to cash.
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TRAVEL

Editor **Rosario A. Garcellano**

Eyeballing a glacier

THE DRIVE along the Icefields Parkway between Banff, Lake Louise and Jasper is pretty spectacular stuff, and an undeniable highlight is the stop at the Columbia Icefield.

Travelers can walk around, make snowballs from the 400-year-old snow, and literally cool their heels

The glacier is a tongue of ice six kilometers long and one kilometer wide that drops almost to the road. Brewsters of Banff offers tours up onto the icy slopes in its especially constructed snow coaches. The 5-kilometer round trip travels up over the ice and the drivers/guides explain how glaciers are formed and point out interesting geological features.

Up at the icefall below the glacier headwall, the snow coach stops and you can walk around on the ice, make snowballs from 400-year-old snow, take pictures and cool your heels for a while.

The tours run from the Icefield Center, a chalet-style stone building which houses The Glacier Gallery, an extensive interpretive center on the National Park. There is also a dining room, cafeteria, snack bar, gift shop and, from the third floor up, a hotel.

The Chalet Hotel has 32 rooms, most of which have at least two queen-size beds and a loft. You can actually hear the glacier moving in the still of the night.

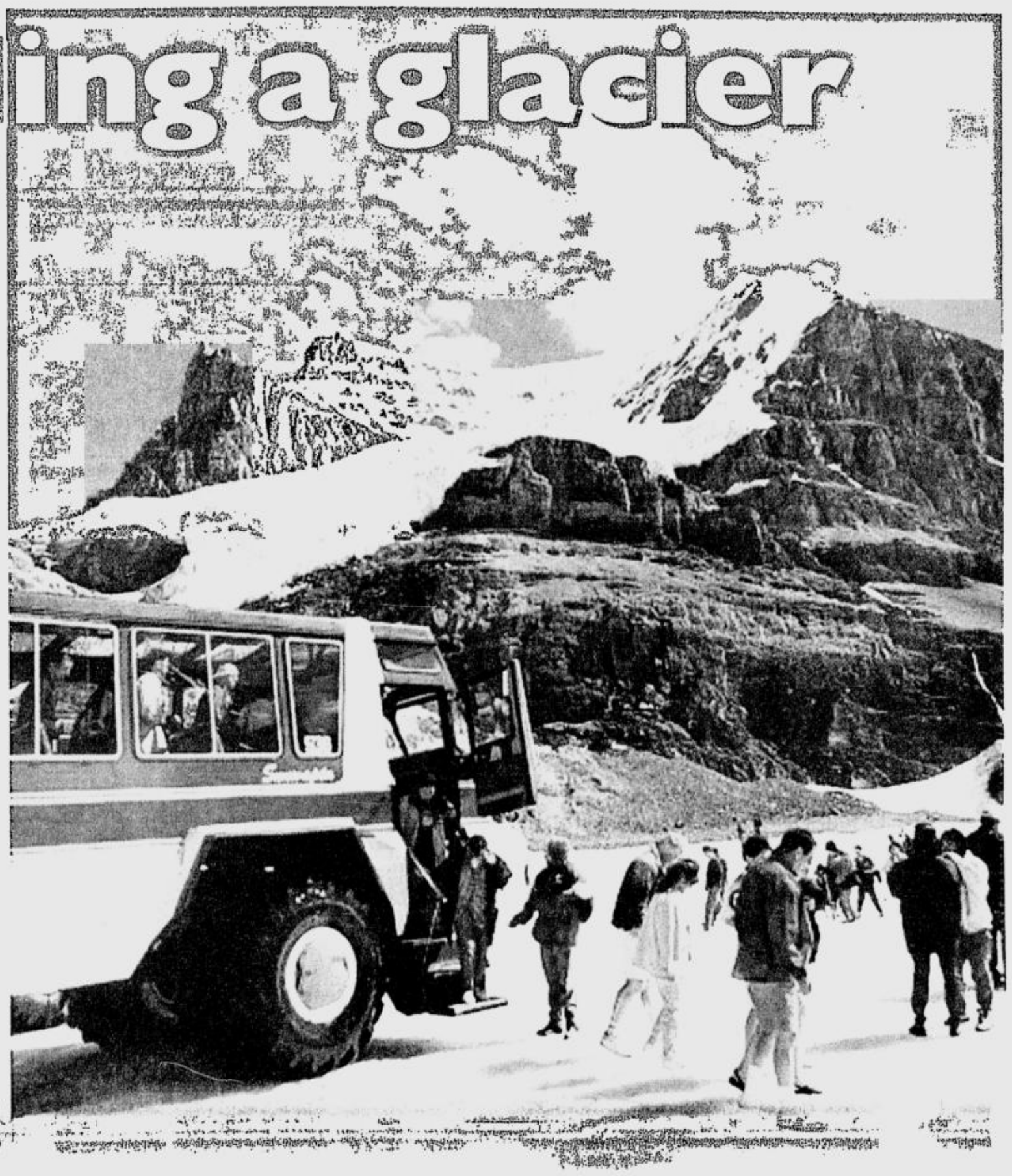
If you are traveling the Icefields Parkway, you can't miss the glacier. From Banff, the Parkway follows the Bow, Mistaya and North Saskatchewan Rivers and, after an essential diversion to see Lake Louise, you return to the Parkway and drive on by Bow Lake, Peyto and Crowfoot Glaciers, Mistaya Canyon and the Weeping Wall to the glacier.

From Jasper, the route passes Athabasca Falls and the Sunwapta Canyon. It is breathtaking stuff—a wilderness habitat for elk, bighorn sheep, moose, mountain goat and both grizzly and black bears.

Allow a whole day for this drive of 230 kilometers from Banff to Jasper. If you are on a motorcoach tour, the Icefield is a major stop. Or you can easily make the roundtrip from Banff or Jasper to the glacier in a day.

Snow coach trips on the glacier run most days from April 12 to Oct. 2. (For more information on the Icefield or the Chalet Hotel, call 1-877-423-7433, e-mail icefield@brewster.ca, or go to http://www.brewster.ca.)

You can also take an interpretive walk on the Icefield from the hotel. These walks are led by experienced and knowledgeable guides, and you get to peer down into crevasses and enjoy a little exercise. A degree of fitness is required. (For more information, go to www.icewalks.com or e-mail iceman@icewalks.com.)



OUT of the snow coach and into magic

BREWSTER

HIT THE ROAD

FRAZZLED? Needing respite from the daily grind? Make your choice from these possibilities and hit the road.

In the water or out. Barely 25 minutes from Ortigas Center is the 7-hectare Club Manila East in the heart of the Rizal suburbs.

The leisure and business complex has a recreational facility called Funtasy Lagoon Water Park, which approximates the shape and dimensions of Laguna de Bay and has sections designed to meet the needs of patrons of all shapes and sizes.

There's a gradually sloping wading pool where little children can safely play. Right beside it, older kids can ride kayaks and the only surf bikes available in the Philippines. There's also a huge water slide, and, for sun-conscious bathers, a screened swimming pool.

If you don't want to get wet and have had enough of lounging in the chairs and recliners, try golf at the resort's 54-bay driving range. It features real target greens with distances of 25 to 225 yards and a 9-hole putting green with bunker and chipping areas.

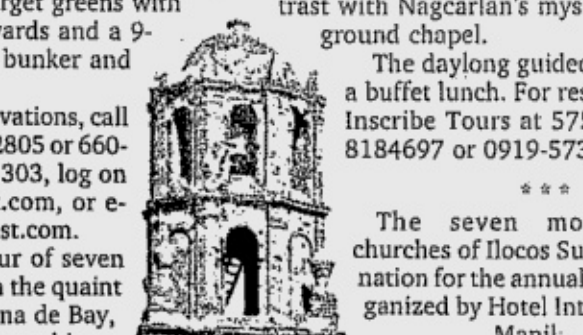
For inquiries and reservations, call Club Manila East at 660-2805 or 660-2801 and 658-0458 loc. 303, log on to www.clubmanilaeast.com, or e-mail info@clubmanilaeast.com.

THE WATER at Club Manila East

IN ANNIVERSARY mode

Visita Iglesia. A tour of seven centuries-old churches in the quaint lakeshore towns of Laguna de Bay, each with its own history, architecture and religious significance, is scheduled on Maundy Thursday (March 28).

In Morong, the baroque church dates back to 1615, its walls still marked by the fighting between Katipuneros and Spanish *guardia civil*. Tanay's church features rococo artwork and 200-year-old stations of the cross. Pakil's church houses a miraculous icon of the Virgin Mary, while the main attraction of the Paete church is the massive painting of St. Christopher portrayed as an *indio*. Majayjay's fortress-like church is one of the biggest in the country, in sharp contrast with Nagcarlan's mysterious underground chapel.



ST. Augustine Church in Ilocos Sur

The daylong guided tour includes a buffet lunch. For reservations, call Inscribe Tours at 575-8370, 0919-8184697 or 0919-573-8871.

* * *

The seven most beautiful churches of Ilocos Sur are the destination for the annual pilgrimage organized by Hotel Inter-Continental Manila.

Tour participants will also have a chance to savor Ilocano delicacies and shop for local handicraft in the heart of Vigan, the provincial capital, which Unesco has declared a World Heritage site.

The tour departs from the hotel on March 26 at 10 p.m. and returns the next day at 11 p.m.

Choose from:

- Option 1 at P8,000 net inclusive of tour for two, overnight stay in a deluxe room at twin-sharing basis and buffet breakfast for two at Café Jeepney.
- Option 2 at P6,000 net inclusive of tour for one, overnight stay (single accommodation) in a deluxe room and buffet breakfast for one at Café Jeepney.
- Option 3 at P5,000 net for tour for one.

All options include round-trip transportation in an air-conditioned tourist bus, the services of an English-speaking guide, breakfast and lunch at Baluarte and packed snacks for each participant.

To book, call 815-9711 local 231 to 233.

Why not Korea? Asiana Airlines is offering a 5-day, 4-night tour of Korea's holy sites, including a visit to Naju, the Blessed Mother's House, where the visionary Julia Kim witnessed an image of Mary shed blood and tears for 700 days.

There's also a 4-day, 3-night shopping spree package, which starts at Itaewon, Seoul's English-speaking shopping district, with about 1,800 stores.

Both tours start on March 28. For inquiries, call Asiana at 892-5681 to 88.

Anniversary treat. In celebration of its 6th anniversary, Holiday Inn Resort Clark Field offers local residents, *balikbayan* and expatriates the "Six Cheers" package of P2,002+ for an overnight stay in a standard room.

The package includes welcome fruit punch; complimentary use of selected resort facilities including the fitness center; complimentary entrance to Casino Filipino Mimosa inclusive of P200 bonus bet vouchers; and a 15-percent discount on therapeutic massage.

The package is available up to March 17. For reservations, call (045) 599-8000, (02) 845-1888, toll-free 1-800-1888-3800, or e-mail hircf@comclark.com.

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26-30 March 2002	**Holyweek Tour:** A Pilgrimage tour of two Regions: **Cagayan Valley & Ilocos Region**

For inquiries and reservations, please call at Tel. No. **851-7294, 853-8728, 0916-3963963.**

Traveling on plastic

IF YOU'RE one of those credit card holders who rarely spend on what are called big-ticket purchases (appliances, furniture, computers and their accoutrements), then travel is something you can splurge on, especially with summer dancing in.

This is the come-on of Bank of the Philippine Islands Credit Card's "Travel Madness 2002," which offers travel packages and discounts for local and foreign destinations until Dec. 15.

A stay of three days and two nights at Cebu's Tambuli Beach Club, for example, with airport transfer, roundtrip airfare, daily breakfast and twin sharing, costs P7,527. The monthly amortization is as low as P450.45 for 24 months.

If you're setting your sights overseas, let's say the zoos, parks and aquariums of Singapore, the straight charge is $306 and the monthly amortization amounts to $18.13, also for 24 months. The fee covers roundtrip airfare, airport transfer, four days and three nights at either the Concorde or Golden Landmark hotels, daily breakfast and a half-day city tour.

Marion C. Kohchet-Chua, BPI Credit Card vice president for marketing and sales, points out that with the special installment plan, card holders don't need to wait and save to travel around the country or abroad.

"This year," she says, "we're introducing enhancements like our partnership with the Department of Tourism, Philippine Convention and Visitors Corp. and Philippine Tour Operators Association in putting together the WOW (Wealth of Wonders) weekends from north to south."

She adds that card holders availing themselves of the promotion will enjoy the lowest prices arranged by the DOT. Apart from that, the plan entitles the traveler to as much as three times the regular card limit or the maximum of P100,000.

Tourism Undersecretary Oscar Palabyab, who calls himself a proud BPI card holder "trying to pile up rewards," says the long weekends that the DOT pushed for last year have proved successful. "Just maybe, the entire Holy Week will be a holiday," he says. (Malacañang has announced something to this effect.)

Palabyab also says Travel Madness may be instructive in that Filipinos will "learn to make early reservations and be conscious of how beautiful our islands are."

"We cannot attract foreigners if we cannot speak well of our country," he notes.

In fact, he says he has no plans of going abroad this summer, part of which he will be spending in Cebu and Tacloban, Leyte.

The following agencies are participating in Travel Madness: Ark Travel Express, Caravan Travel and Tour, Lucky Travel Corp., Manila International Travel, Philscan Travel and Tour, Rajah Travel Corp., Reli Tours and Travel, Universal Holidays and World Master Tours and Travel.

The partner tour operators are: Annset Holidays Inc., Ansacor Travel Corp., Avian Travel, Baron Travel Corp., Bayan Ko Tours and Travel, Cordym Tours and Travel, Flight Shop, House of Travel, Marsman Tours and Travel, Morning Star Travel and Tours, Sharp Travel Service, Southeast Travel Corp., Tour Spectrum and T.R.I.P.S. Travel. Philippine Airlines, Lufthansa, Thai Airways and Qantas Airways are also cooperating with offers of special rates.

Elizabeth Lolarga

Raffle gives away 70 VCD units

FIFTY-PERCENT discounts plus the chance to bring home a brand-new Philips VCD players are at stake in the Robinsons Malls' Midnight Sale on March 15, 10 a.m.-12 mn. Over 70 units are at stake plus 200 audio CDs as consolation prizes. Purchases made from any Robinsons Malls outlet, Robinsons Food Court, Robinsons Movieworld snack bar, or a one-time purchase of four Robinsons Movieworld tickets or a Dreamday ticket from Dreamscape, Dream Town or Dream Zone qualifies a shopper to join. Raffle draw is on March 22.

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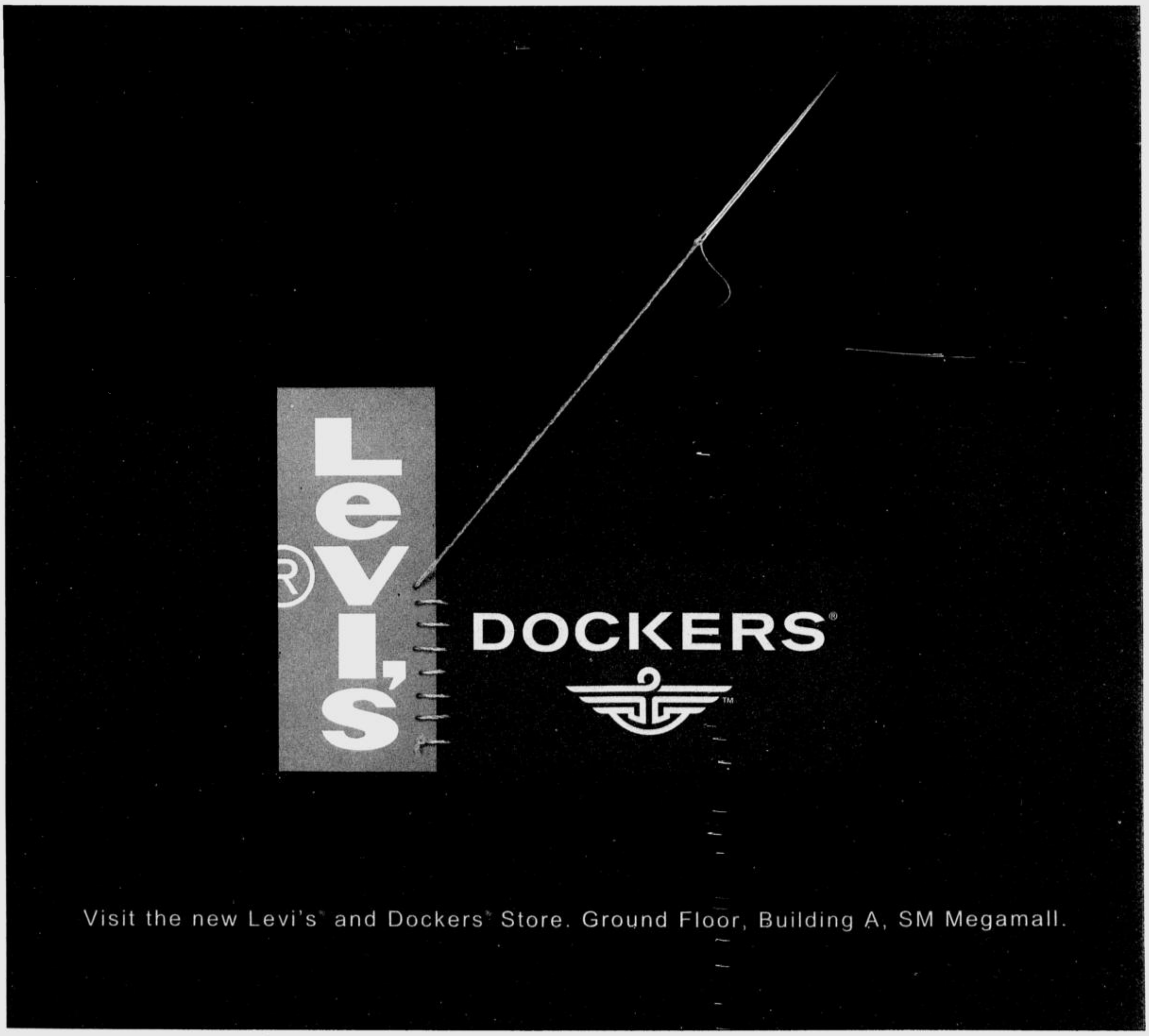

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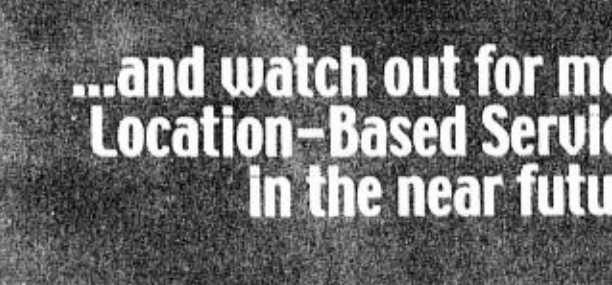

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More bridal gowns on page D6

Once upon an enchanting garden

Story on page D4

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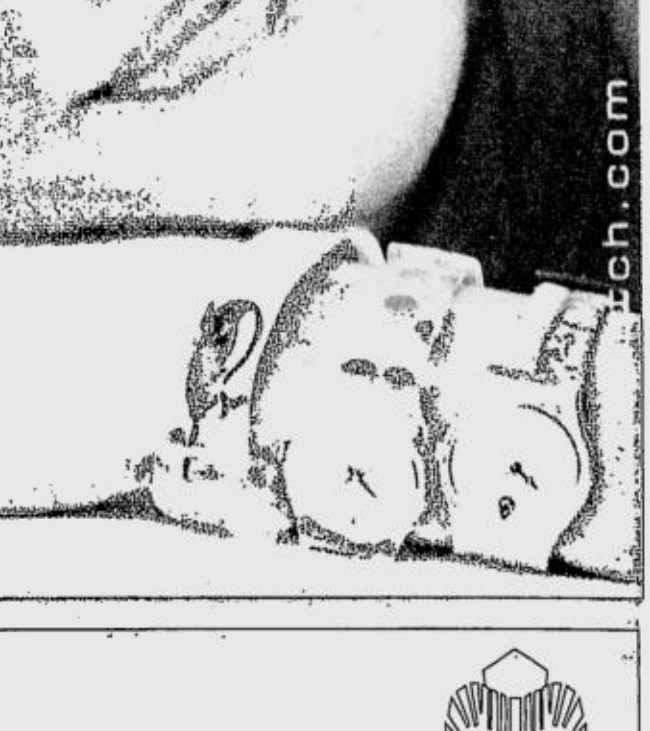

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CRUZ-REMPILLO

Rouel H. Cruz, son of the late **Ricardo C. Cruz** and **Felicitas H. Cruz**, and **Fe Milagros B. Rempillo**, daughter of the late lawyer **Jacinto B. Rempillo** and **Salvacion B. Rempillo**, tied the knot on Jan. 10 at the Sto. Domingo Church, QC. Reception was held at Aberdeen Court, QC.

MILLS-TORRES

Pamela Torres, daughter of **Tito** and **Bins Torres**, wed **Simon Mills**, son of the late **Dennis Murray Mills** and **Enid Muriel Laverack** of England, on Feb. 8 at Our Lady of Consolation Parish Church. Reception was held at the bride's residence. The couple resides in San Francisco, USA.

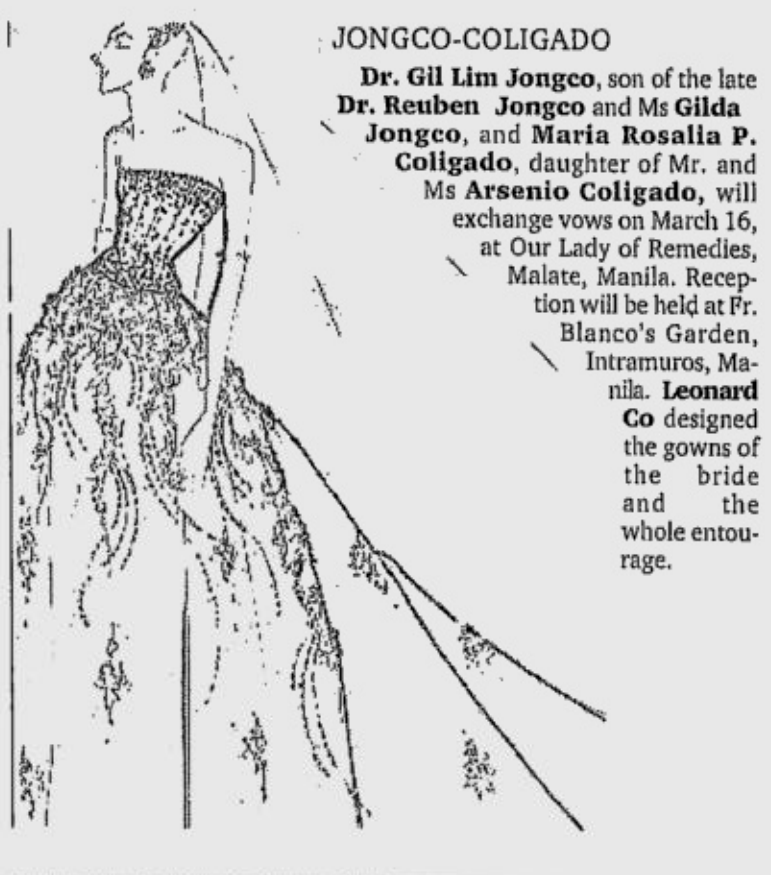
Milestones

We're accepting announcements of weddings and engagements. Please send the following typewritten information: names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, gown designer and other related information. Readers can send sketches of gowns and pictures of the couple at least one month before the wedding at P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City. This will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the sender.

MANGALINDAN-SANTOS

Ma. Felicitas Santos, daughter of **Francisco** and **Rose Santos** of Taguig, wed **Victorio Mangalindan Jr.**, son of **Victorio** and **Angelina Mangalindan** of Quezon City, on Jan. 19 at the Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City. Fr. **Armand Robleza**, Msgr. **Jaime Zurbano Jr.**, Fr. **Bong Lopez** and Fr. **Robert Reyes** concelebrated the Mass. The bride's gown was designed by **Joe Salazar. Jesi Mendez** did the makeup.

Reception followed at the Rigodon Ballroom, Peninsula Manila.



JONGCO-COLIGADO

Dr. Gil Lim Jongco, son of the late **Dr. Reuben Jongco** and Ms **Gilda Jongco**, and **Maria Rosalia P. Coligado**, daughter of Mr. and Ms **Arsenio Coligado**, will exchange vows on March 16, at Our Lady of Remedies, Malate, Manila. Reception will be held at Fr. Blanco's Garden, Intramuros, Manila. **Leonard Co** designed the gowns of the bride and the whole entourage.

ISIDRO-AVENTURA

Dr. **Arnold C. Isidro**, son of the late **Juan G. Isidro** and **Rosita C. Isidro**, wed Dr. **Marichelle L. Aventura**, eldest daughter of Dr. and Ms **Avenilo P. Aventura**, at Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati on Jan. 10. Reception followed at The Peninsula, Manila. Photo shows the newlyweds with the bride's parents, groom's mother and eldest brother **Allen C. Isidro**.

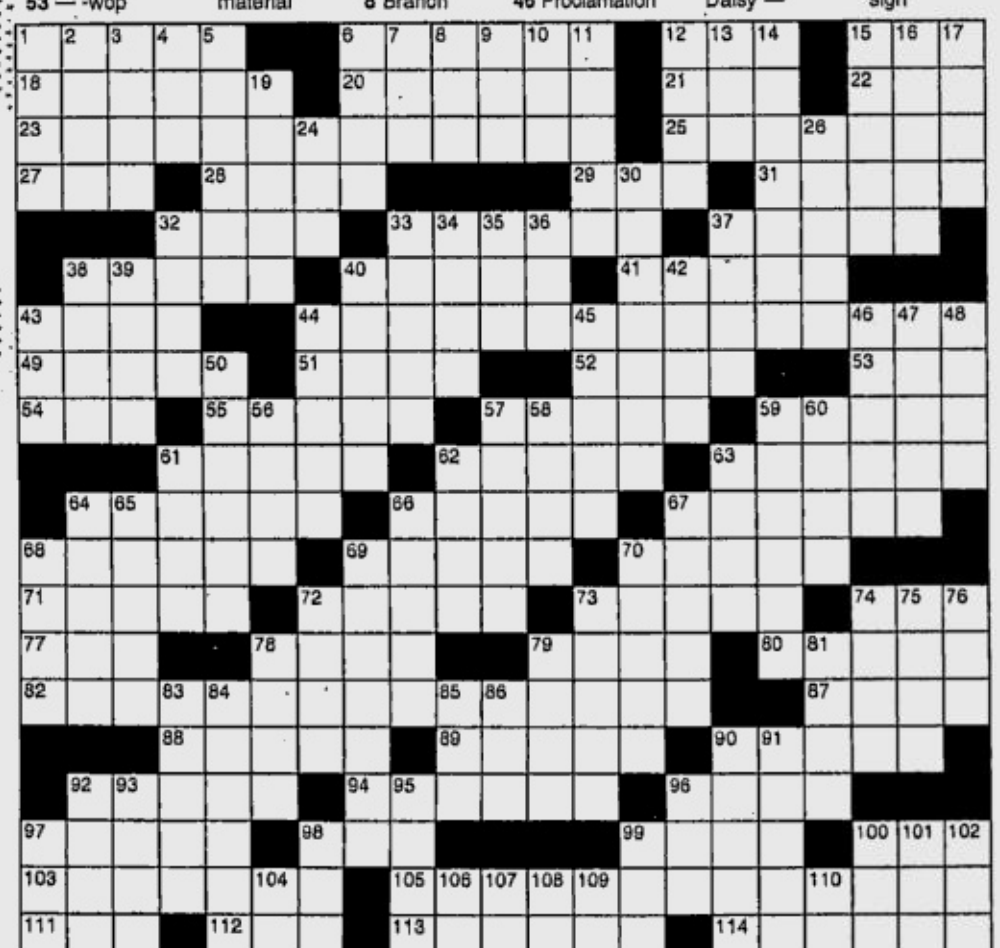
BAYANIN DEBUT

Olive E. Bayanin, daughter of **Ely** and **Mimi Bayanin**, celebrated her 18th birthday on Feb. 9 with a cotillion de honor at the Rigodon Ballroom of the Peninsula Manila. **Larry Espinosa** designed the gown.

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Beauty's beau
6 Wrap up
12 President Bush was one
15 Numbers man?
18 More painful
20 Swerve
21 Vigor's partner
22 Moon crawler
23 Riddle: Part 1
25 Mollify
27 Badminton stroke
28 Privy to
29 Fancy vase
31 Declaims
32 "Hey —" ('68 smash)
33 Order
37 Sign of summer
38 Texas landmark
40 "M" man
41 Contaminate
43 Author Dinesen
44 Riddle: Part 2
49 Sought silver
51 Makes leather
52 Like the Kalahari
53 — -wop
54 Tablet
55 Commodious
57 Nodded off
59 Cocky kids
61 Exodus edible
62 Annoyed
63 Melee
64 Illinois city
66 Riddle: Part 3
67 Votes in
68 Grand relative
69 "— of Fools" ('67 hit)
70 Prowl
71 Injures
72 Stuffable pasta
73 Big wheel on "Wheel"
74 Peckinpah or Wanamaker
77 Granada gold
78 Goatish gamboler
79 Shakespearean villain
80 New Mexico's state flower
82 Riddle: Part 4
87 Heavy reading?
88 Ponti's partner
89 French spa
90 Roofing material
92 Dennehy or Keith
94 Firstborn
96 Rachel's sister
97 Zagreb native
98 Needle feature
99 Sharp
100 — Dhabi
103 In a rough manner
105 Answer to riddle
111 Broad st.
112 Bend someone's — (yak)
113 Emulate Earhart
114 Tranquil
115 Petty or Poston
116 HST's successor
117 Conkling or Ates
118 Thoroughfares

DOWN
1 Holler
2 Narcissus' nymph
3 Melville monomaniac
4 Plop down
5 Monotony
6 Read quickly
7 Tolstoy title start
8 Branch
9 Pigskin prop
10 "Tell — No" ('65 hit)
11 Happen next
12 Writer Hunter
13 Sass
14 Lasting effect
15 Trolley sound
16 Trattoria treat
17 Iowa city
19 Sonata movement
24 Adversary
26 Big revolver?
30 Hit the hay
32 TV's "— and the Fatman"
33 Soft
34 Ages
35 "A — in the Dark" ('88 film)
36 Legal matter
37 Competed
38 — Minor
39 Arrive at Kennedy
40 Andes animal
42 Eager
43 Prankster
44 Right a wrong
45 Looks longingly
46 Proclamation
47 Greek vowels
48 Renowned seamstress
50 Daddy ducks
56 Step — (hurry)
57 Blue-dress wearer?
58 The yoke's on them
59 Like some stairs
60 Taxi
61 — Blanc
62 Lab equipment
63 Word with circus or collar
64 Cold-shoulder
65 Ballet company
66 "— Fall in Love" ('62 hit)
67 Savor
68 "Scat!"
69 Rampur relish
70 "The Dragons of Eden" author
72 Rational
73 Egyptian Nobelist
74 James Herriot, for one
75 Pinnacle
76 Dogpatch's Daisy —
78 Office plant
79 Egyptian deity
81 Hatch's home
83 Nom de crime?
84 Detested
85 With 93 Down, "Air Music" composer
86 First lady?
90 Goes after
91 Poet Sidney
92 Tenor's tribute
93 See 85 Down
95 "The Merry Widow" composer
96 Rock's — Zeppelin
97 Gab
98 Thornfield governess
99 Elbow's counterpart
100 On the briny
101 Curve
102 Applications
104 Little guy
106 "Ab —" (from the beginning)
107 "M*A*S*H" extras
108 Cul-de- —
109 From — Z
110 Theater sign



ANSWER ON PAGE D5

LISING-SEBASTIAN

Raffy T. Lising, son of **Gilbert** and **Bienvenida Lising**, will wed **Beverly B. Sebastian**, daughter of **Francisco** and **Milagros Sebastian**, on April 5 at the Sta. Lucia Parish Church, Manggahan, Pasig City. Reception will follow at the Vista Verde Clubhouse, Cainta, Rizal.

The bride will wear a gown with an ecru tube bodice and a beaded chiffon skirt by **Minda Ong**. Wedding coordinator is **Nhel Baylon**.

LICAUCO-MAGSALIN

Antonio Roberto Licauco Jr., son of Dr. **Antonio** and **Belen Licauco**, recently exchanged marriage vows with **Talitha Maria Magsalin**, daughter of engineer **Rolando** and **Mary Ann Magsalin**, at the Chapel of the Transfiguration, Caleruega, Nasugbu, Batangas. The ceremony was officiated by Fr. **Boyd Sulpico**. Reception was held at the Canyon Woods Resort Club, Laurel, Batangas. **Nelson Villarica** took the photos.

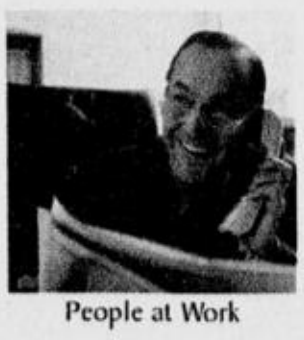
CUE-TAN TAN

Ermie Tan Tan, daughter of **Erwin Uy Tan** and **Loreta Tan Tan**, will exchange vows today with **Custer Dalida Cue**, son of **Henry Cue Eng Huat** and **Teofelina Dalida Cue**, at the San Sebastian Church, Manila.

The bride will wear a creation by **Ricci Lizaso**. The gown is made of shimmering duchess satin with the bustier top embellished with sparkling embossed floral beadwork, rhinestones, crystals and frosted pearls. The same motif is on the hemline of the skirt and the train.

The Philippine Daily Inquirer business section. Guaranteed to catch your interest and keep you informed.

Business Monday



People at Work

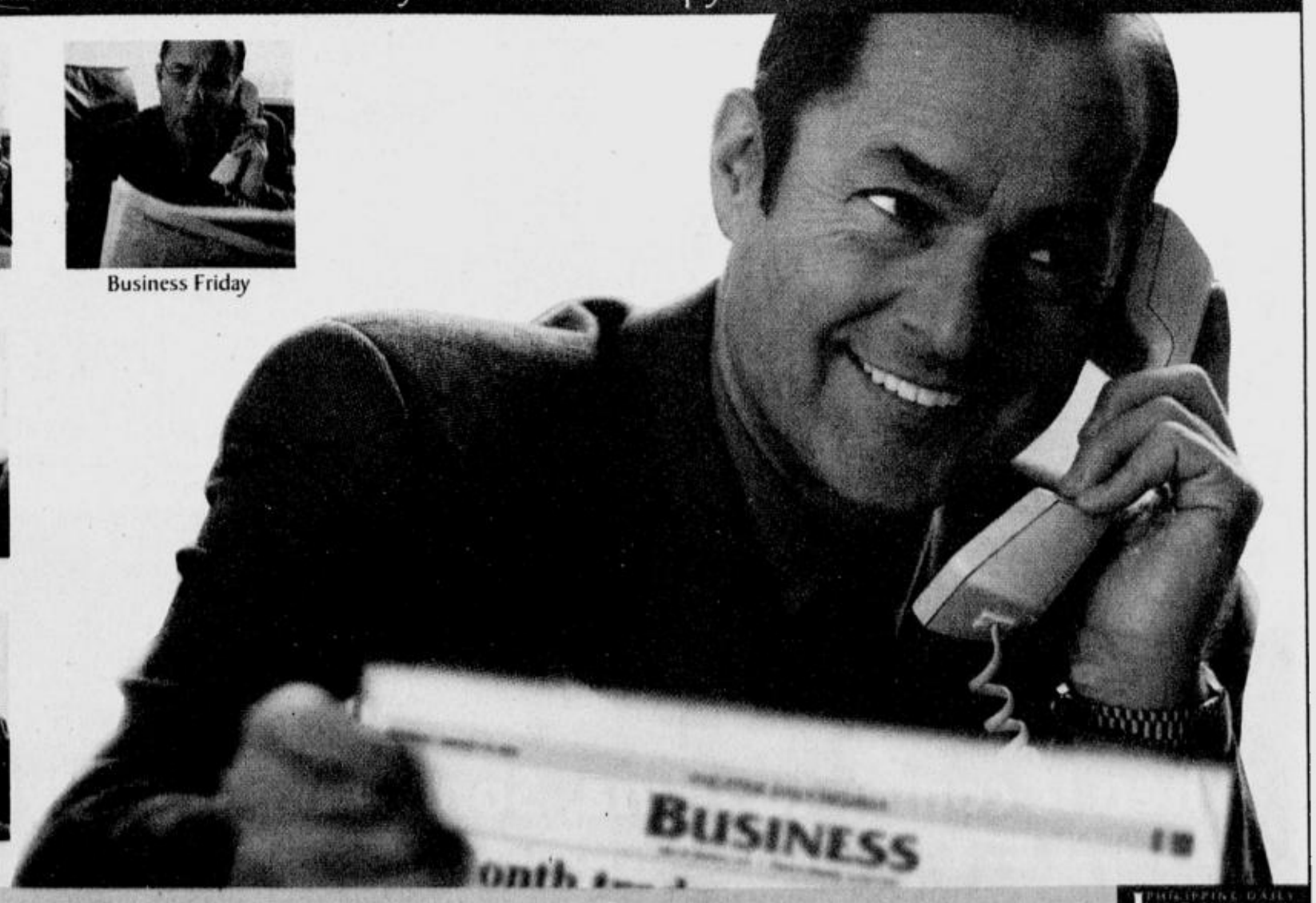
Business Friday

Sunday Biz

Real Estate

Motoring

Infotech



INQUIRER

St. Joseph Shrine in Batangas marks 237th year

THE MAGNIFICENT church of St. Joseph in San Jose, Batangas is 237 years old. Established in 1765, it was only last year that we knew about it when we wrote on the canonization of Bishop Joseph Marello.

St. Joseph Marello, who was canonized on Nov. 25, was the founder of the Oblates of St. Joseph Marello who run the parish in this town. Of late, it has been consecrated as the Archdiocesan Shrine of St. Joseph in the Diocese of Lipa.

Dondie Ocampo, who arranged the trip of the Oblates to Rome for the canonization, told me that the image of St. Joseph in this church is very miraculous. Devotees from other towns of Batangas and nearby Laguna visit the church on the feast of St. Joseph on March 19.

My friends and I who call ourselves Pilgrims of Mary visited the shrine on Feb. 23 as part of a pilgrimage to some churches in Batangas. We were amazed to find the church so well kept. The image of St. Joseph with the Child Jesus in his arms is enthroned high up in the altar.

We met the parish priest, Fr. Randy Marquez, and his assistant, Fr. Gerry Yabyabin.

Canonization of Bishop Marello

Fr. Randy gave us a magazine called The Marellian Today, which tells the story of the canonization of Bishop Joseph Marello. It says that there were 22 Filipino Oblates of St. Joseph, one Filipino diocesan bishop and 40 lay people from the Philippines. There were another hundred Filipinos working in Rome and parts of Italy who also attended the canonization.

Modern apostle of youth

After he pronounced Bishop Marello as a saint, the Holy Father, in his short homily, called the new saint the "modern apostle of the youth." Pope John Paul II urged young men and women to follow St. Marello's example of self-giving, especially during difficult times. He also recalled Marello's heroic acts of caring for the poor and the elderly during his time.

St. Marello's devotion to St. Joseph

Bishop Joseph Marello was so intense a devotee of St. Joseph in his lifetime that he founded in 1878 a congregation of religious men to promote the devotion to this great saint. His whole spirituality rests on his devotion to the foster father of Jesus.

He said: "Whoever desires closely the Divine Master in the observance of the evangelical councils, the house of St. Joseph is open to him. For the purpose of living a silent, hidden but laborious life in imitation of that great model of a poor and obscure life, he will have in it the opportun[illegible] becoming a true disciple of Jesus Christ.'

Pilgrimage to San Jose

I encourage devotees of St. Joseph to visit his shrine in San Jose, Batangas, which is near the town of Lipa. It would be nice to include this church in your *visita iglesia* during this coming Holy Week. Santuario de San Jose in Greenhills is also run by the Oblates.

Centering prayer

AN INTRODUCTORY workshop retreat on centering prayer will be held at the St. Joseph Marellos Retreat House in Tagaytay on March 15-17. Those interested can call Anamarie Llanos at 842-0102 and 842-4030. Bobby Novenario, who practices centering prayer, highly recommends that people take the workshop.

Novena to St. Francis Xavier

TRY to join the ongoing novena to St. Francis Xavier at Ermita Church at 12 nn until March 12. Leading the novena is lawyer Antonio Pesigan, who has been a devotee since 1947 when the Holy Arm of the saint arrived in the Philippines from Goa and was placed in the old Ateneo Chapel on Padre Faura Street.

Lawyer Pesigan transferred the "novena of grace" to Ermita Church in 1994, when the Ateneo chapel was torn down to make way for the construction of Robinson's Galleria.

March 4-12 is a regular novena event in Ermita Church, and many people have been helped through the intercession of St. Francis Xavier. To lawyer Pesigan, this devotion to the saint, patron of East Indies, is brought to us. [illegible]ena is lawyer Pesigan's way of saying "thank you" for all the blessings he and his family have received all these years.

Apologies to Don Felbaum

APOLOGIES to Don Felbaum who initiated the foundation dedicated to Our Lady of Garabandal in the Philippines. He is very much alive. Those who passed away were Ethel Valiente, author of an angel book, and Sister Judge of St. Paul's.

Our column on Our Lady of Garabandal two weeks ago has generated interest in the showing of the tape of the apparitions in parishes and religious organizations.

Peter Galace, national director of the Philippine Garabandal Foundation, would like to point out that when Our Lady told the visionaries in June 1965 about the great miracle that would happen between April 8 and 16, Our Lady did not specify 2002. He said his group is going to Garabandal in April, not because of the miracle, but as part of their devotion to Our Lady of Garabandal.

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

Padre Pio devotion in Manila

WHEN businessman Chito Bertol suffered a serious disease in 1997, he prayed to Padre Pio and vowed to propagate his devotion. He asked artist Abe Lucas to paint a portrait of the saint, which now hangs in the worship hall of the Manila Seedling Bank on Quezon Avenue corner Edsa.

When the Spirit of Love Catholic Community had difficulties in holding their prayer meetings at the Santuario de San Jose in Greenhills due to lack of privacy, Chito offered his place at the Manila Seedling Bank.

In no time at all, the worship hall became a place of "life in the spirit" seminar and healing Masses. On the first Monday of every other month, the healing Mass of Padre Pio is held at 6 p.m.

I attended the Mass last March 4 and I had a beautiful experience. The next healing Mass of Padre Pio is on May 6.

Those who wish, by the way, to go to Rome for the canonization of Padre Pio on June 16 can call Sally Maddatu of World's Wonders Inc., which is organizing a group to go there. Call Sally at 726-6162 or Annie Lukban at 939-6528.

Madre Ignacia day

THE RVM sisters honored their foundress Madre Ignacia del Espiritu Santo with testimonies of healing through her intercession on the occasion of her 339th baptismal anniversary. The event took place at the MICS auditorium in the RVM Center on N. Domingo Street, QC.

Those who experienced miracles through Mother Ignacia's intercession can write the Religious of Mary at 214 N. Domingo St., QC.

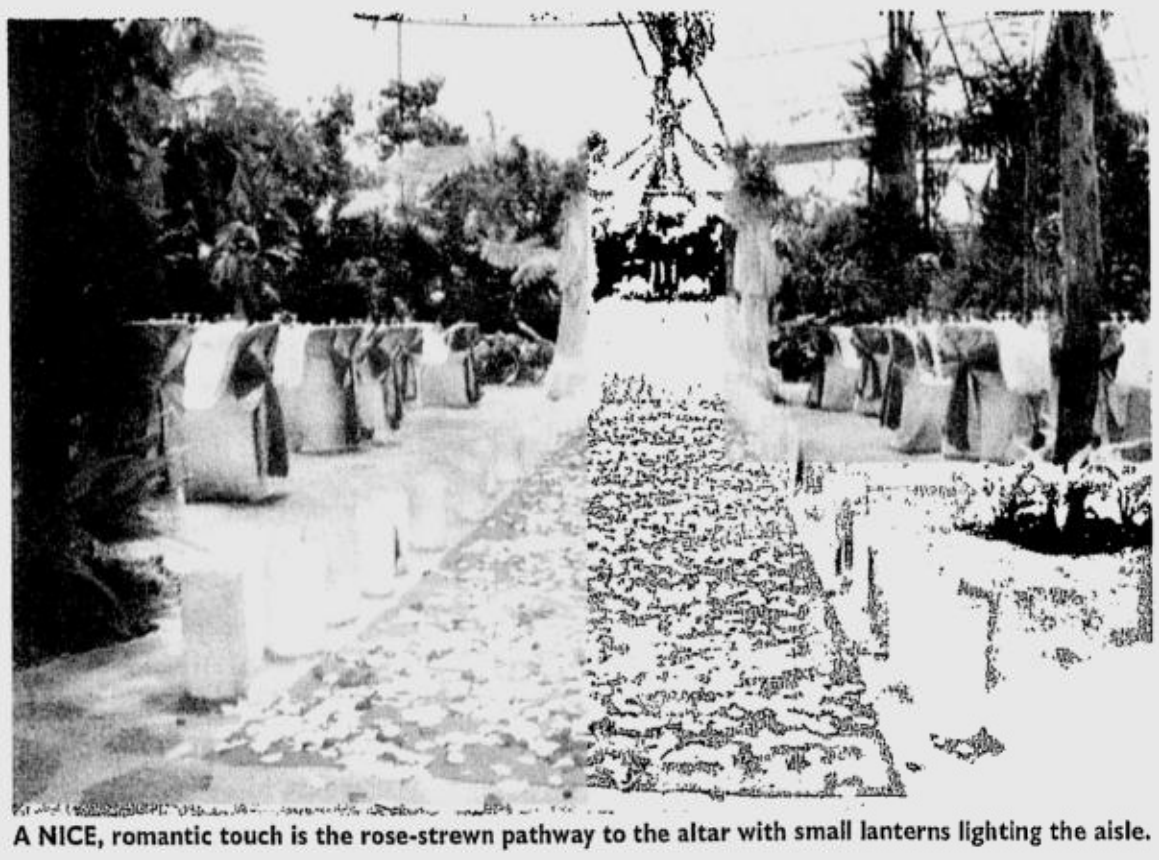
St. Joseph exhibit

ST. Joseph devotees are invited to the nine-day novena Masses from March 10-19 at the Hospicio de San Jose. The all-male choir Psalm 47 will sing during the Mass on March 17, 6 p.m.

THE ARCHDIOCESAN Shrine of St. Joseph in San Jose, Batangas is run by the Oblates of St. Joseph.

Peralta dresses up Tanauan beauty candidates

WELL-KNOWN fashion designer Oskar Peralta will dress up the candidates of the beauty pageant Mutya ng Lungsod ng Tanauan 2002 on March 10, 6 p.m., at the municipal hall gym. The gowns are made of fully beaded top in red, white, blue and yellow. The same colors appear in the chiffon skirts that are double balloon.



A NICE, romantic touch is the rose-strewn pathway to the altar with small lanterns lighting the aisle.

Once upon an enchanting garden

By Cathy Babao Guballa
Photos by Chito Vecina

ENCHANTED is the first word that comes to mind when you step into Fernwood Gardens (tels. 925-0020 or 926-2493).

Stepping into this 7,000-sq-m property tucked away in a nondescript and quiet section of Quezon City is like, as "Secret Garden" author Hodgson-Burnette put it, "being shut out of the world in some fairy place."

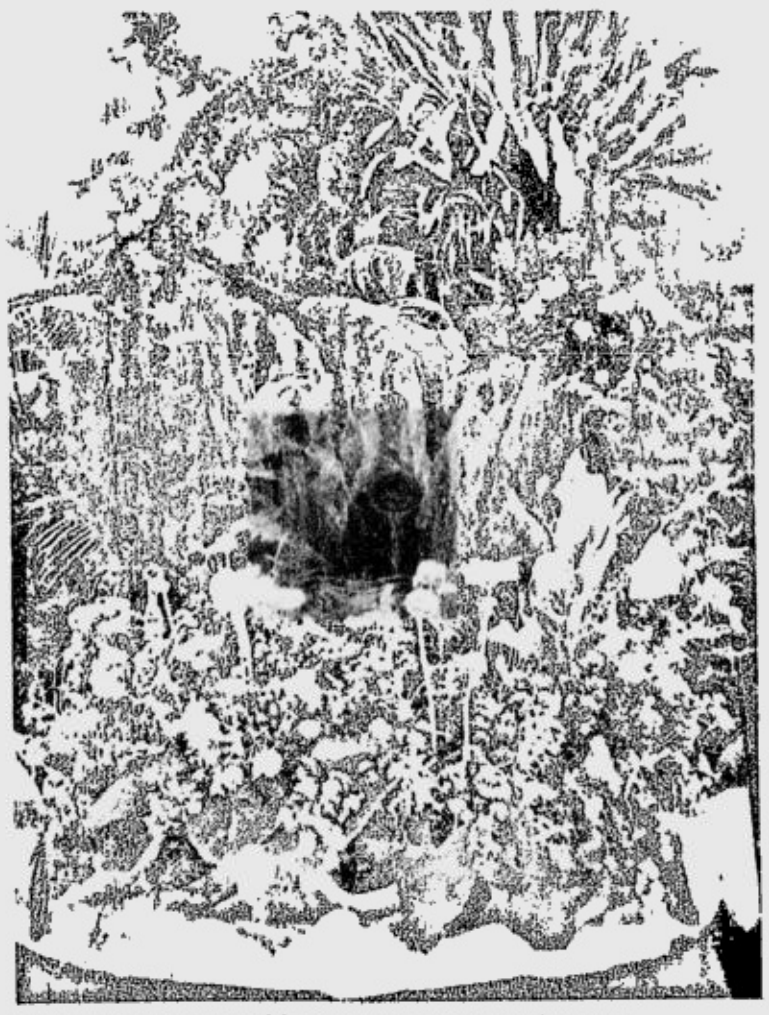
Al de Veyra, owner and managing director of Fernwood Gardens, did not expect that his family's ancestral home would one day turn into a tropical oasis where love and a thousand ferns continually bloom. Opened in late 2000, Fernwood has become a popular choice for garden weddings.

TABLE set-up in lavender and silver by VS & F Classic Food. A decorative tree made up of a hundred different fern species stands in the back.

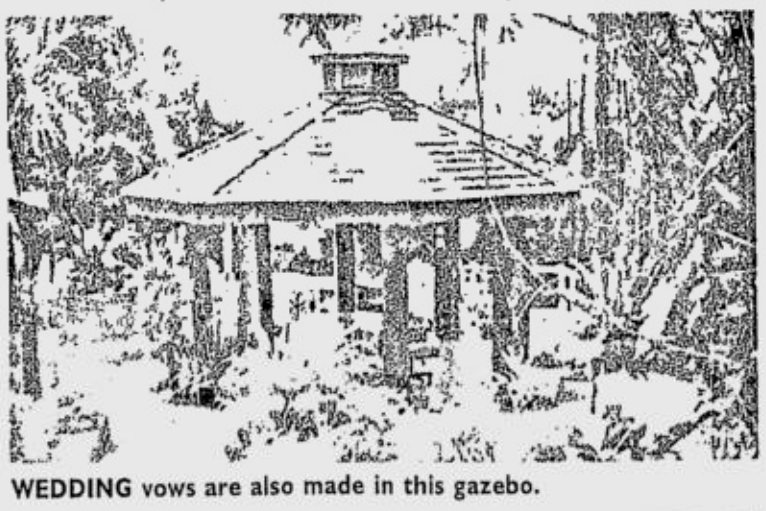
De Veyra migrated to the United States in 1984; a couple of years later, his mother Clemencia passed away. Coming home in the latter part of 1998 to fix the garden was a very personal project for him as he felt that he was fulfilling his late mother's wish.

"She had always wanted a gazebo here, a pond there...," he said. De Veyra soon realized that his simple project to restore his mother's garden made for a unique business.

After picking up on his relatives' suggestion to hire out the place as wedding venue, he put his heart and soul into the project. Even now Fernwood Gardens is



DIFFERENT species of ferns adorn the reception area.



WEDDING vows are also made in this gazebo.

A COCKATOO stands alone after a spat with its mate.

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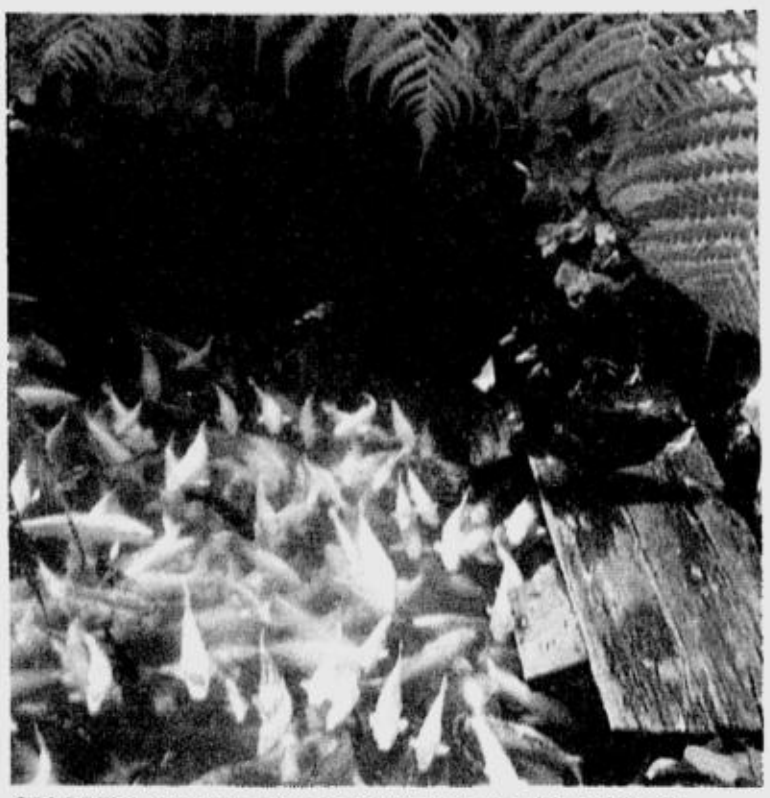
Lights & Sounds: Audi Compulsion
Organizer: Themes & Motifs The Special Events Co.

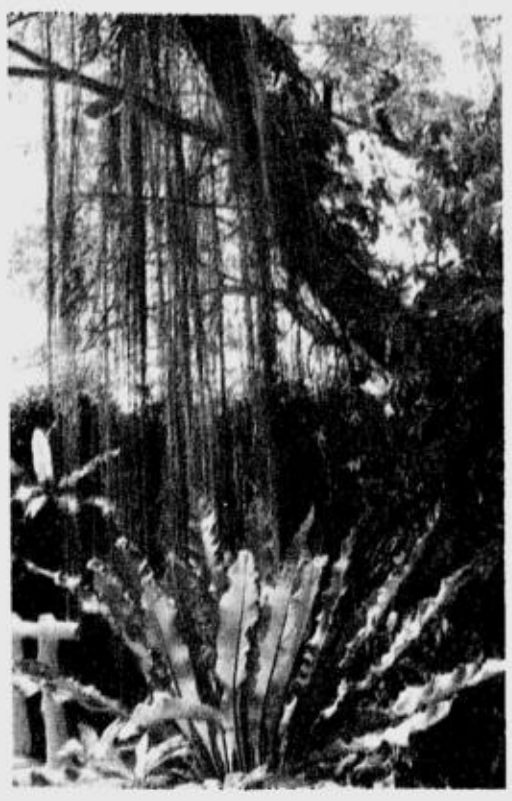
Promo period is from April 6-7, 2002 Per DTI - NCR Permit # 0411, Series of 2002

An ancestral home has become a tropical oasis where love and a thousand ferns continually bloom



COLORFUL Japanese Kois share the lagoon with a pair of Mallard ducks.

STAGHORN ferns



BIRD'S nest ferns

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

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evolving and expanding.

Rain or shine

Rain is the bane of most garden weddings but not at Fernwood. De Veyra purposely installed what he called a skydome to cover and protect visitors who come to Fernwood.

"I've had weddings and receptions here in the middle of a raging storm and, mercifully, everyone came out unscathed," De Veyra said. No fear of brownouts either as Fernwood is also equipped with a generator.

For the guests' comfort, there are two huge, airconditioned washrooms strategically hidden away from the garden and positioned underneath a "cave" by the man-made lagoon. Parking is not a problem either as there is a huge, well-guarded lot that can accomodate 170 cars. "Unless of course they're all Expeditions," De Veyra quipped.

Although the creature comforts have been meticulously planned and executed, the best part of Fernwood, however, lies in the charm and romantic ambiance that Mother Nature herself provides. Fernwood is a cross between the fictional garden in the book "The Secret Garden" and the fictional island in the '80s television show "Fantasy Island."

The place, patterened after a lush, tropical rainforest, practically takes your breath away. The skydome, hardly noticeable, has a protective solar film coating to filter the sun's rays. Flowering vines delicately creep up the heavy-duty plastic tubular archs that frame the transluscent skydome.

Everywhere you are surrounded by all kinds of trees and a hundred species of ferns that flourish with the help of misting machines creatively hidden by the ponds to simulate the ambiance of a rainforest. The focal point is a small lagoon where a thousand Kois (Japanese carp), in bright hues of orange, share a home with a pair of Mallard ducks and a solitary swan. De Veyra is expecting the arrival of another swan soon to keep the existing one company.

Birds as well

Exotic birds are a common sight at Fernwood—African lovebirds merrily perch on the trees, a blue and yellow Macau named Squeaky sits on one of the small wooden bridges, while a pair of white cockatoos have a lover's squabble over by the fountain. De Veyra has a total of 40 well-trained birds. "During weddings, they don't bother the guests at all, they enjoy the company actually," he said.

Couples have a choice of elegant table arrangements that can be set-up by any of Fernwood Garden's six accredited caterers: Tri-Chef's, VS & F Classic Food International, Josiah's, Hizon's, Swan and Via Mare.

Beside the main house, which is the De Veyra ancestral home, is a gazebo where a lot of couples have made their vows. "We have had quite a number of Christian weddings here as well," De Veyra said. Fernwood can be a place for both wedding and reception or just for the grand reception. It can seat a maximum of 450 guests at full capacity. There is a flat rental rate for five hours and the caterer adds the per plate charge. Couples can save on flower expenses as there is little need to add to the already lush flora.

De Veyra said large weddings, those with 300 or more, would benefit most from their

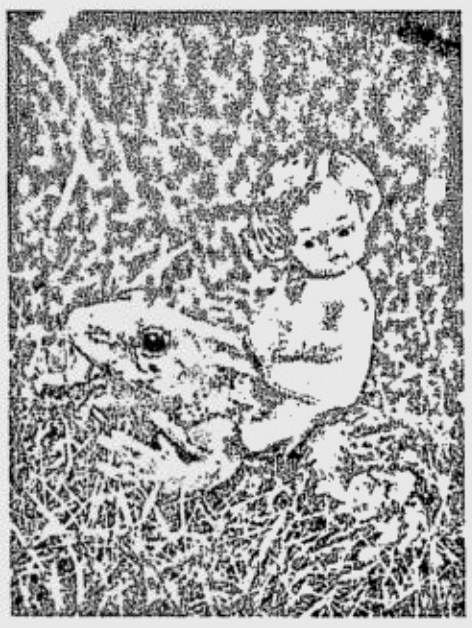
ONCE/ P.D7

FLOWERS also abound in Fernwood.

A HUNDRED fern species flourish with the help of misting machines.

EXPOSED:

The Things Kids Get Into!



When it comes to playtime, kids are unstoppable!

With their wild imagination and hyper-energy taking over, expect them to go out and run around the neighborhood: sailing paper boats along street canals, drenching each other with water guns, making mudpies with bare hands and hunting anything from bugs to bullfrogs. And have you noticed how they love testing things with their mouths? Oh well, as they say, kids will always be kids, and it is at this stage where they are most loveable!

Unfortunately, this is also the time they are most vulnerable to germs, viruses and bacteria. Exposure to these eventually weaken kids' immune system, leaving them more prone to a variety of ailments and diseases. To a mother like you, that can be a real concern. That is why, Mead Johnson has come up with a product to address this real need. Introducing New Sustagen. It's everything you've always loved in Sustagen...and more! Because now, it is power-packed with excellent levels of immunity-supporting nutrients like Zinc, Vitamin A and Vitamin B6-necessary for anti-body production to protect against disease-causing germs, viruses and bacteria! Immune system development may vary slightly according to age. For instance, children from 1-3 years are still developing their immune system, so it is imperative that this is supported fully with the right nutritional supplement. On the other hand, it is inevitable for older kids 3 years and above to come in contact with different environments as they face a bigger world. Proper nutrition is similarly important to give him added protection.

With its two variants, Sustagen is perfect for both these crucial ages. Sustagen Junior is ideal for kids 1-3 years of age, with vitamins and minerals to support a developing immune system. Then there's Sustagen Kid for kids 3 years and above, with the right vitamins and minerals for better protection against germs, viruses and bacteria exposure. It is also reassuring to know that the nutrient levels are based on the recommended dietary reference intake for children.

From now on, you don't have to worry needlessly about kids getting into all sorts of messy, dirty, sloppy, yucky and mucky playstuff!

Bye-bye bacteria! Good riddance, germs! Adios, virus!

Give your kids Sustagen everyday for super immunity!

Super Immunity. Super Sustagen.

SUSTAGEN®

FULLY beaded French lace top with high neck collar and extended sleeves paired with metallic shantung A-line skirt with draping cummerbund. Brooch hairnet for the headdress.

JO Ann Bitagcol in a gown of Italian pearl-white brocade; haltered low-back with big collar, bouffant box-pleated skirt accentuated with cummerbund traced with metallic silver Swarovski crystals; tiara hairnet headdress.

White lace and promises

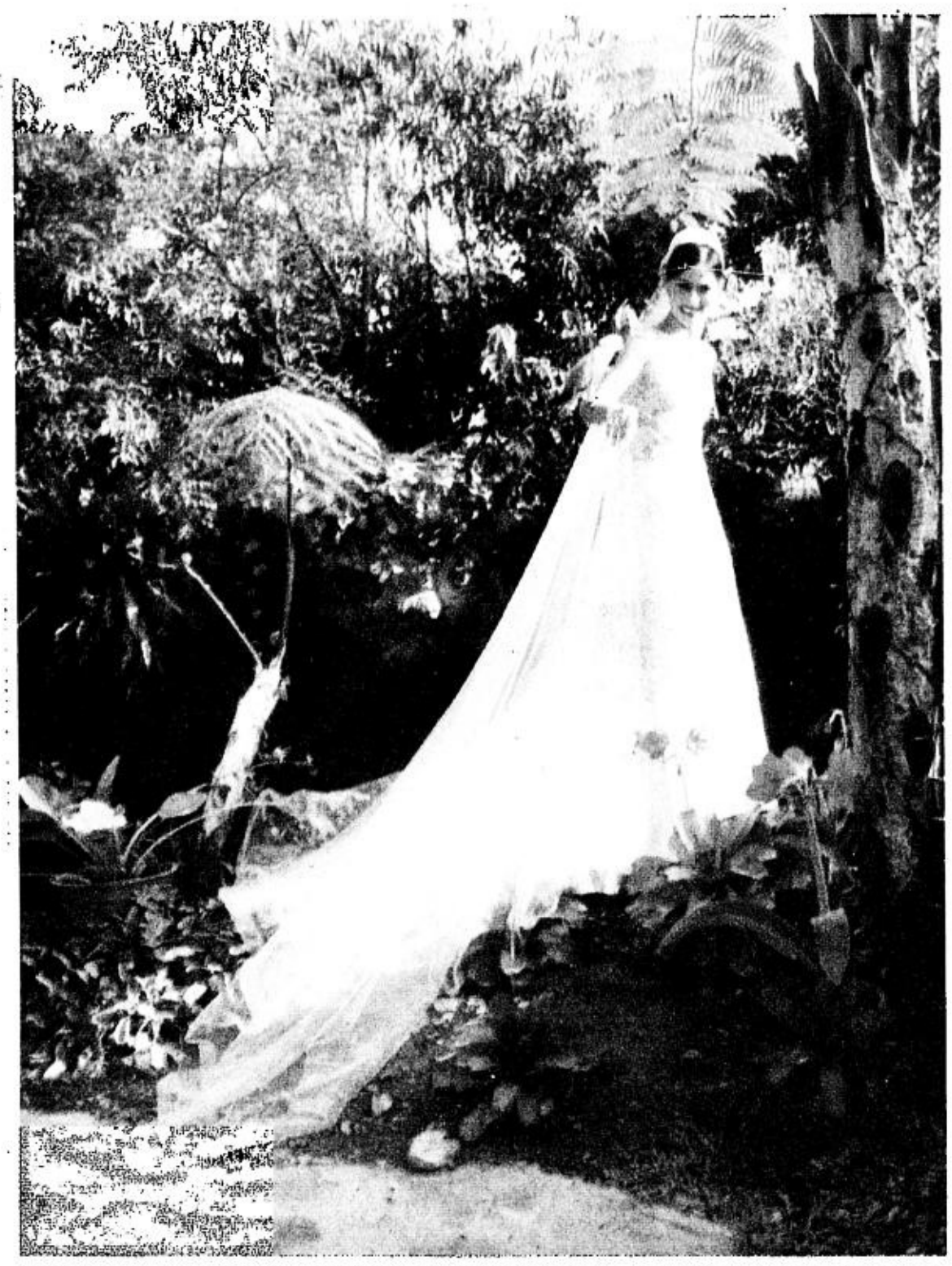
Photos by Chito Vecina
Art direction by Noel Manapat

BRIDES almost always have a special glow and it must come from being loved. But trust designer Eddie Baddeo to make a bride look devastatingly stunning in a gown made of white lace, brocade or satin, landscaped with crystals, beads or glass, accentuated with sash, cummerband or just a blushing bride's svelte figure. They're the stuff wedding dreams are made of, and Baddeo's brides live them.

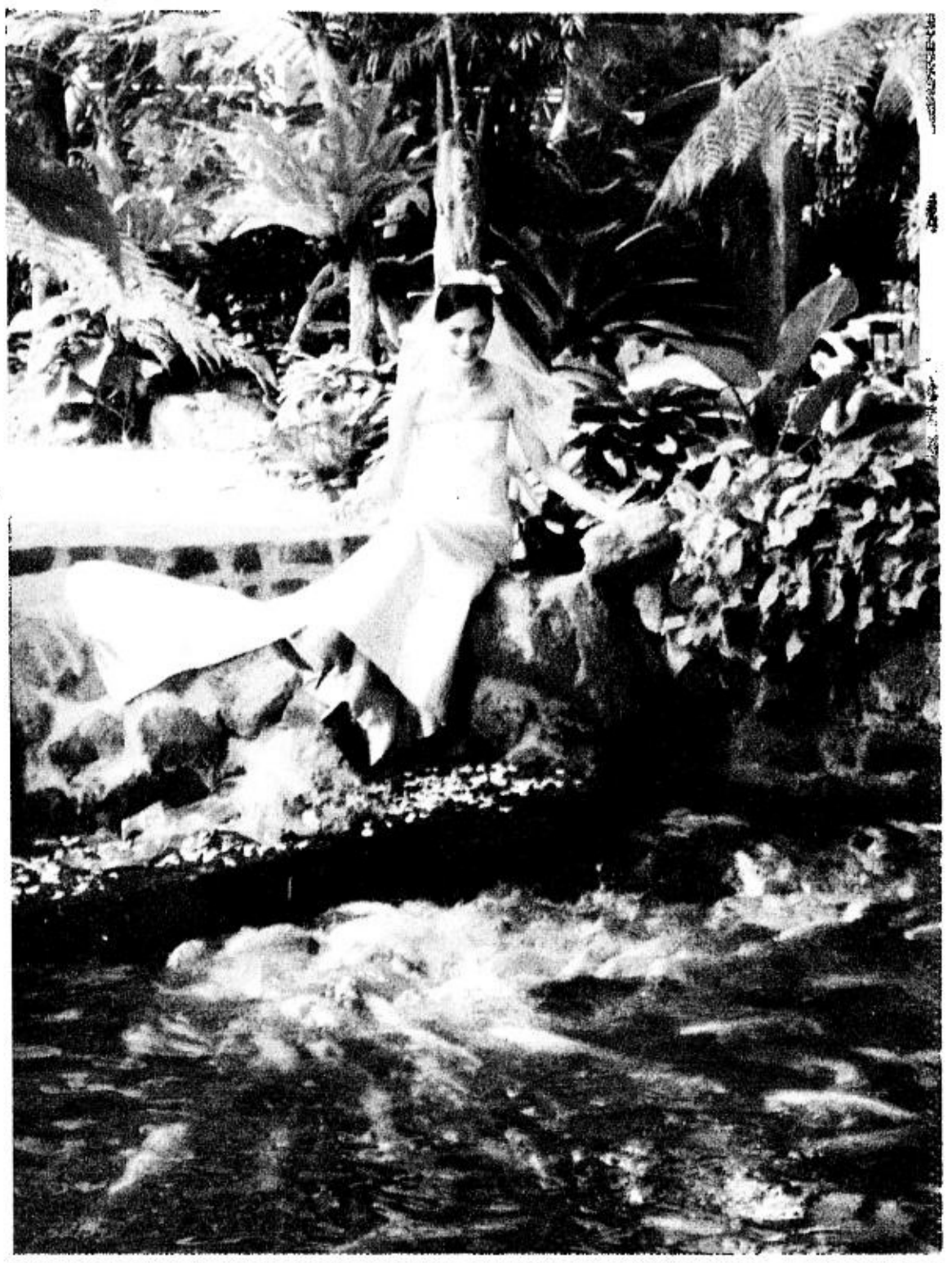
EAZEL Don in Swiss lace bodice embellished with Swarovski crystals, caviar and glass beads paired with bouffant shantung skirt with draping obi sash. Cameo brooch short veil for the headdress

MILK-WHITE brocade A-line gown in metallic gold thread fabric. Sabrina neckline accentuated with trimming of Swarovski crystals, which are also used on straps. Bow and bustle are attached to the train. Pillbox hairnet serves as headdress.

MODELS:JO ANN BITAGCOL AND EAZEL DON
VENUE: FERNWOOD GARDENS, QC
BRIDAL BOUQUET: PACIFIC BLOOMS, EXAMINER STREET, WEST TRIANGLE, QC
SHOES: WILSON SHOES
HAIR AND MAKEUP: ERIC MANINGAT
EDDIE BADDEO'S ATELIER IS AT 63 WEST AVE., QC
(TEL. 371-5843/9384)



VIRGINAL white duchess satin and French lace fabric. A-line see-through gown with fully beaded caviar and glass beads at the hipline. Lace skullcap with veil as headdress.



WHITE brocade A-line gown in metallic silver thread fabric. Corset top and skirt were traced and embellished with caviar beads. Pillbox and illusion tulle veil as headdress.

A TRANSLUCENT dome that protects visitors from sun and rain is hardly noticeable amid a thousand ferns and other plants.

Once upon an enchanting garden

From page D5

pricing scheme.

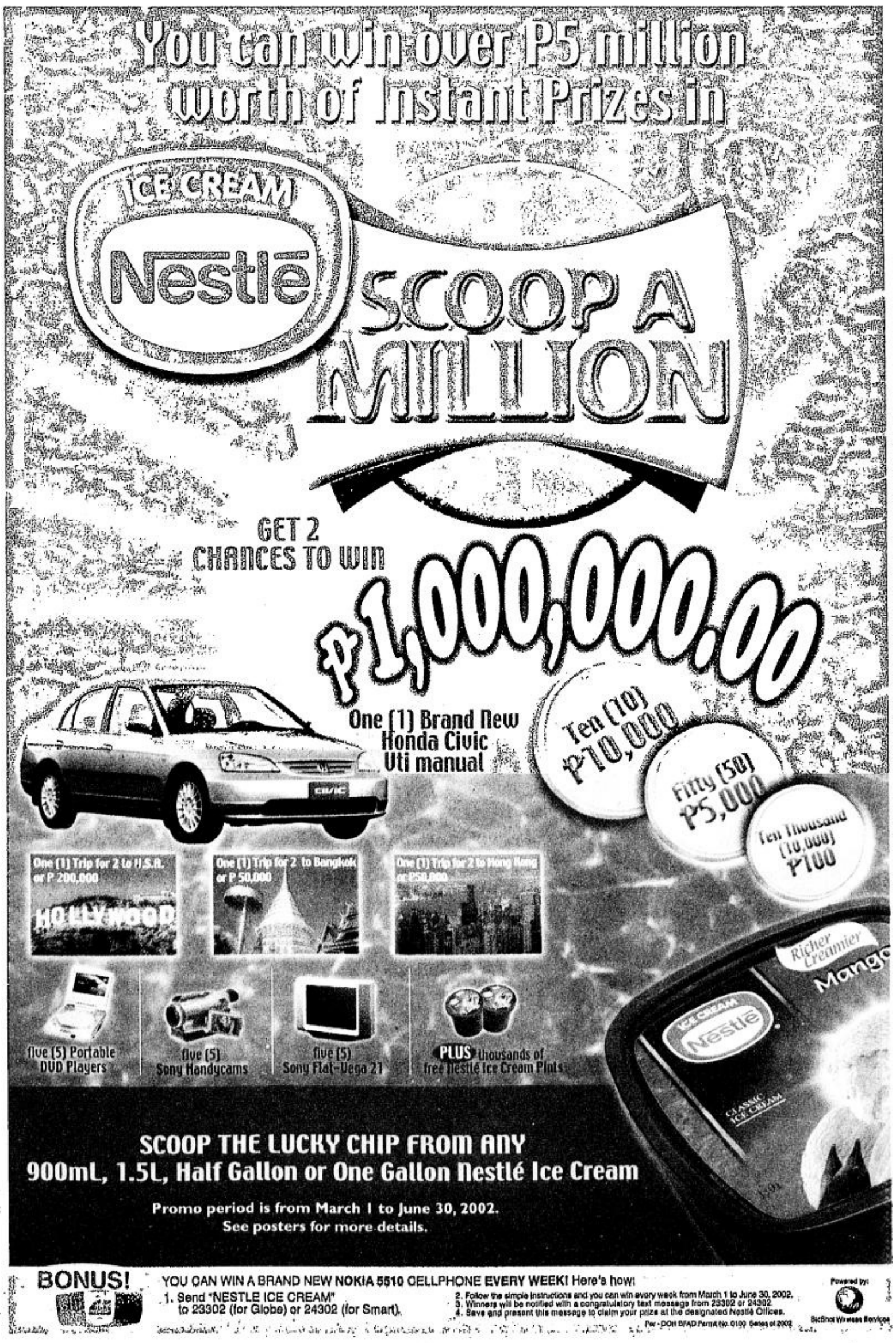
"We have a menu at P460/person. With 300 guests, that would come out to an additional P200/head for the rental of the place—that's only P660/person and less than what you would pay in a five-star hotel," he explained. A special room is provided for the bride where she and her entourage can change and relax while waiting for the ceremonies or reception to begin. The venue itself is located 20 to 30 minutes away from many churches in the Quezon City area.

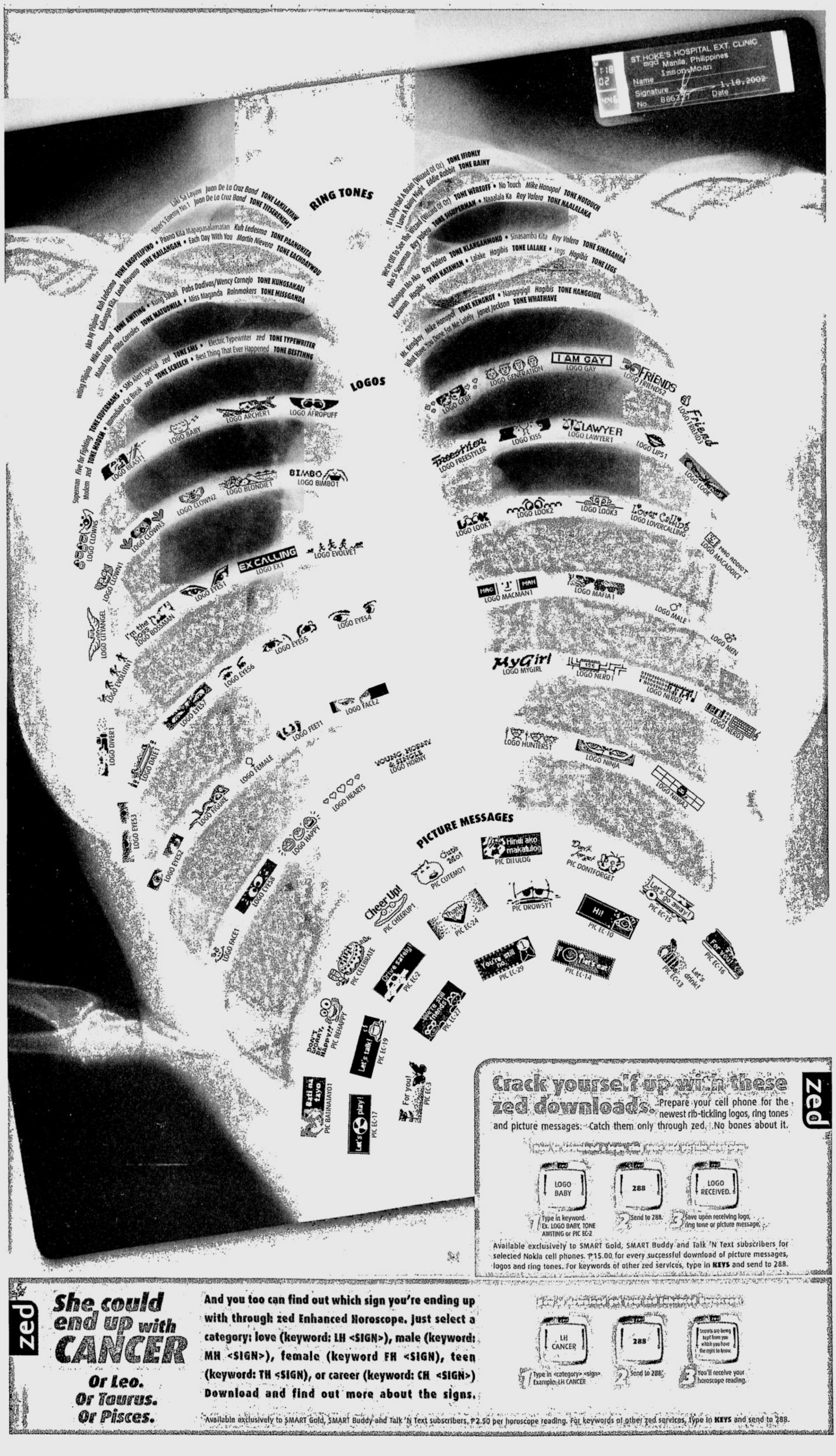
If you've always dreamed of a wedding in a magical garden and walking down a rose-strewn pathway on an evening lit by a thousand firefly lights, this is the place for you. Marriage may not turn out be a bed of roses, but you can at least give it a start that's nice and sweet.

Visit www.fernwood garden.com

E-mail the author at cbguballa @inquirer.com.ph

VS & F Classic Food settings for the bride and groom.





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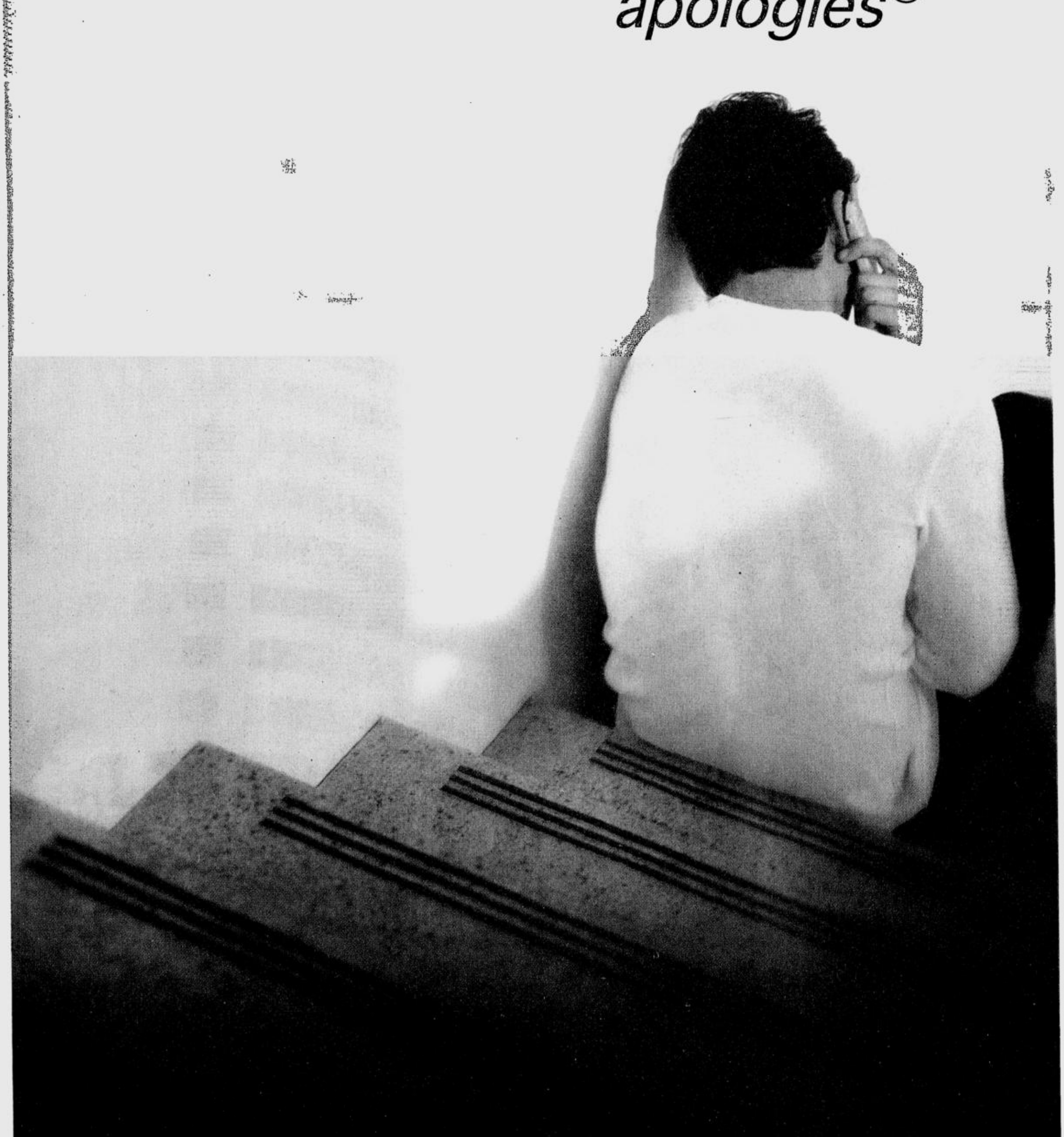

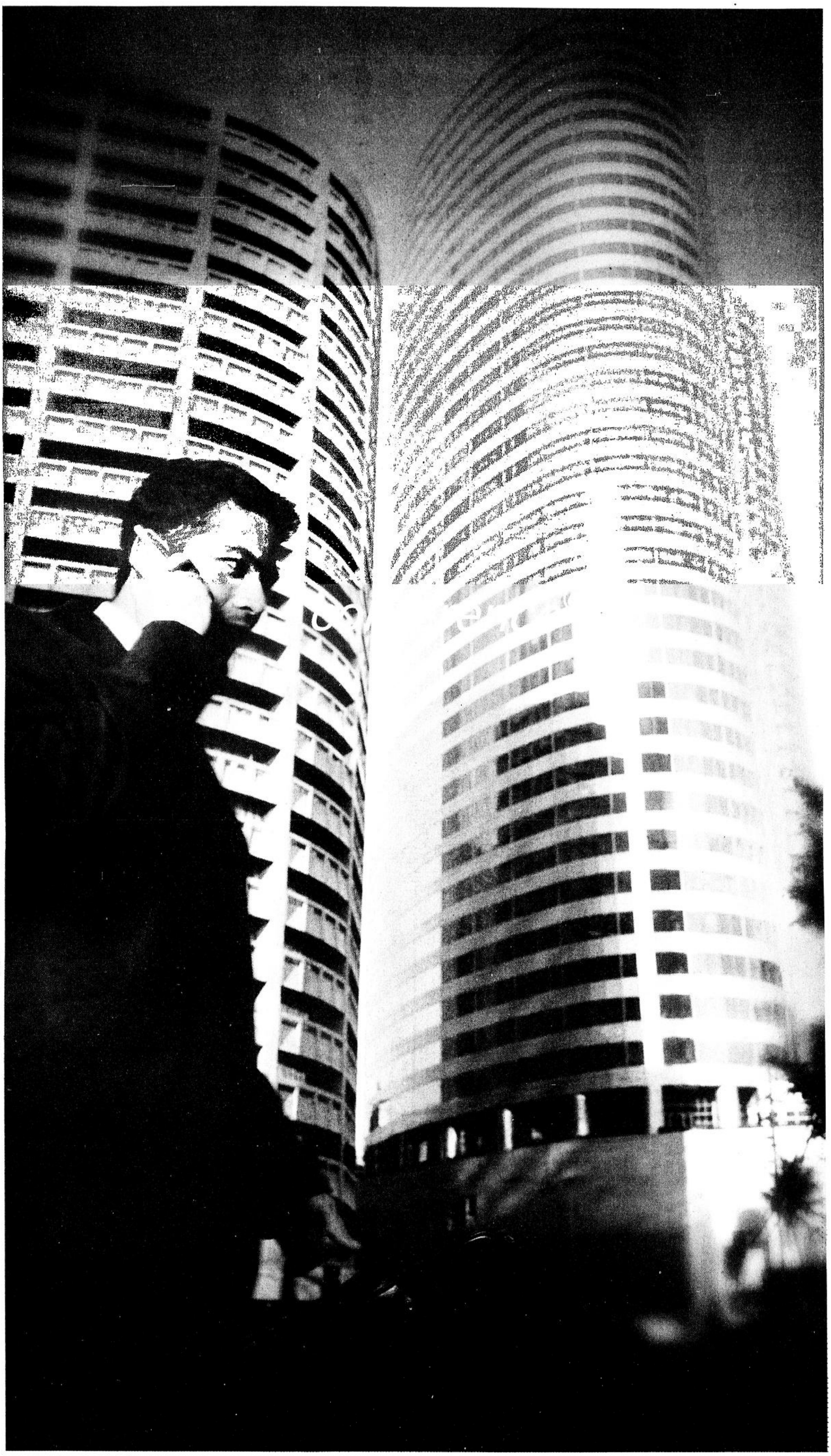

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MANAGERIAL

Our client is a highly reputable American company who is a leader in their industry. Currently in the process of expansion, it seeks to hire qualified personnel to be part of the start-up team for its manufacturing operations.

PRODUCTION MANAGER

Hired candidate will be responsible for the start-up and management of plant operations. He is either an Industrial/ Mechanical Engineering graduate or a Management graduate with solid experience in similar operations. Equipped with at least 5 years of industrial manufacturing experience, he must have proven skills in handling managerial responsibilities, is a proactive leader, results-oriented and imbued with a strong sense of responsibility and commitment.

MECHANICAL SUPERVISOR

Qualified candidate will take charge of the machining area (lathes and mills) and overall maintenance of machinery and plant facilities. A Mechanical Engineering degree or its equivalent is desired. He must have at least 2 years experience in machining/maintenance work from an industrial manufacturing operation or maintenance service outfit. He must be hardworking, self-driven, able to communicate well and has had previous supervisory experience.

ELECTRICAL/QUALITY SUPERVISOR

Hiree will be tasked to handle quality management. An ECE/ Electrical Engineering graduate or its equivalent, he must have at least 2 years experience in handling quality assurance. Highly computer literate, he must be knowledgeable in designing databases and spreadsheets. He has sound leadership ability and is able to interface effectively with people at all levels in the organization.

Successful candidates will be based in Laguna. While not a must, ability to speak Mandarin will be a distinct advantage. Competitive remuneration package and comprehensive training will be provided to hired candidates. Applicants can send/e-mail resumé to:

GEORGE GARRETT GUILFORD & ASSOCIATES
Unit 708, Globe Telecom Plaza,
Pioneer corner Madison Streets, Mandaluyong City
Telephone Nos.: 635-5297; 638-5326
or 638-5302 loc. 105/108
Fax No.: 633-6122

E-mail address: rpsearch@i-next.net

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- with entrepreneurial mind

Handicap 50+ is still OK

Sony Life has been operating in Japan for more than 20 years and came here in the Philippines in the year 1998. It's a flagship company of Sony's financial business group and pursuing the standard of excellence like our peer Sony Group members such as Sony Electronics, Sony Music, Sony Pictures and Sony Playstation.

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We accept applications as long as you have these requirements:

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- ❑ Age 30-40
- ❑ Currently earning more than **P 48,000** a month
- ❑ **No experience in life insurance/pre-need industry**
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Send your resume to:
35/F PBCom Tower, 6795 Ayala Avenue corner Herrera Street, Makati City or Fax it to 819-1803.
For inquiries please call 819-6001

Only qualified applicants will be contacted

Sony Life

The ***Peace and Equity Foundation*** is a non-stock, non-profit organization committed to the vision of a poverty-free society. It is a funding mechanism that seeks to support projects that address poverty, inequity and structural injustice in rural and urban poor communities.

If you believe that you can make a difference in other people's lives and would be willing to commit yourself and actively participate in the Foundation's pursuit of its mission, we invite you to join us to fill in the following positions:

Executive Director

The Task

Reporting to the President and Board of Trustees, leads in setting the Foundation's strategic direction, executes the directions/thrusts, integrates/initiates the various/new programs, maintains strategic networks, ensures financial viability and adequacy of financial controls and takes charge of the efficient and effective day to day management of the Foundation, its assets and staff.

The Requirements

Holds a master's degree in Business, Entrepreneurship, Social Science, Development Management or any related field Strong specialization in microenterprise and microfinance. At least 10 years managerial experience in a development organization (private or otherwise), with significant experience in a grant making, non-profit organization. Excellent conceptualization, leadership and management skills and excellent written and verbal communication and presentation skills. Good human relations skills.

Grants Officer

The Task

Reporting to the Grants Manager, evaluates project proposals submitted for funding, conducts proponent/organization assessment, performs project monitoring and evaluation functions, provides technical assistance in institution building, project development, management, monitoring and evaluation.

The Requirements

College degree preferably with masteral units. With expertise in any of the following areas: enterprise development and management, credit management, institution building, community organizing. Good verbal and written communication skills, analytical and with good human relations skills. At least three years experience in a grant making non-profit. Mindanao and Visayan-based professionals are encouraged to apply.

Please forward your resumé, transcript of records and photo not later than March 15, 2002 to:

THE PRESIDENT
Peace & Equity Foundation
Rm. 216, Institute of Social Order
Ateneo de Manila University Complex
Katipunan, Quezon City; Fax No. 426-5951

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Training & Development Manager (Code: TM-Trn)

The Training Manager will be the key player in designing, implementing and overseeing the training programs of the company. The task includes developing training manuals, administering tools and job aids for performance enhancement, and coordinating the implementation of client-specific training. He/she will also be expected to play a vital role in implementing career and competency development programs for all employees.

The ideal candidate are persons between twenty-five and thirty-five years of age; at least three years of hands-on exposure in training and employee development. Experience in Customer Relationship Management and competency-based systems are a definite advantage.

QA Manager (Code: QAM-QA)

The Quality Assurance Manager will be responsible in developing, quality systems and guidelines that would enhance company efficiency and effectiveness. Specific duties would cover setting-up of quality standards necessary to ensure company-wide objectives are met; intitute tools that will ascertain all client reportorial requirements are of highest standards. The ideal candidate must have at least three years solid experience in quality assurance, two years of which must be in a supervisory capacity acquired in a call center/telecoms/service industry. Persons between twenty-five to thirty-five years of age are preferred.

Payroll Analyst (Code: PA-Fin)

The Payroll Analyst will be responsible for ensuring the accuracy of computation, timeliness of release, and confidentiality of information related to payroll. The ideal candidate must have at least 2 years extensive experience in payroll administration. Must have sufficient knowledge in government mandated regulations (ie. Tax, SSS, HDMF, PhilHealth, etc) and Philippine wage law. The candidate must be Finance graduate; must be a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). He/she must have excellent inter-personal skills. Persons between twenty-five to thirty years of age are preferred.

LAN Tech Engineer (Code: LTE-IT)

The LAN Engineer will be responsible for planning, designing and implementing network and security solutions. He/She is also required to administer the network and provide hardware/ software techical support to all users. The candidate must be a university/college degree holder in BS Electronics/Electrical Engineering or Information Technology; must have at least 2 years work experience in LAN/WAN and firewall technologies; must be knowledgeable in Windows 2000, Windows NT 4.0, Exchange 5.5/2000, ISA, Proxy 2.0, IIS 5.0/ 4.0 and SQL 2000/7.0 and other Microsoft Back Office products; must have experience in installing, configuring and implementing Windows 2000/NT 4 in an enterprise environment. Above average communication skills. MCSE, MCP preferred but not required.

Customer Care Specialists (Code: CCS-PM)

The Customer Care Specialists will be at the forefront of our organization. They will be the focal point for all customer requests, and will be responsible for providing front line support and assistance to our clients. Our Customer Care Specialists are expected to analyze, diagnose and solve problems, with consistently high customer satisfaction rating. They should be courteous, customer-focused, and must be team spirited. The ideal candidates for the position are persons who are internet savvy college graduates; excellent communications skills; are between twenty and twenty-seven years of age, with excellent interpersonal skills; and are willing to work shifts. Previous experience in the customer relations management industry and can speak any foreign language such as Fookien, Mandarin, Cantonese and Spanish is a plus.

Interested parties are requested to submit their comprehensive resumé indicating the position code to:

GLOBALSTRIDE
Attn: Human Resources Department
29/F IBM Plaza, Eastwood City Cyberpark, E. Rodriguez Avenue, Bagumbayan, Quezon City
Email: jobs@webservasia.com.ph
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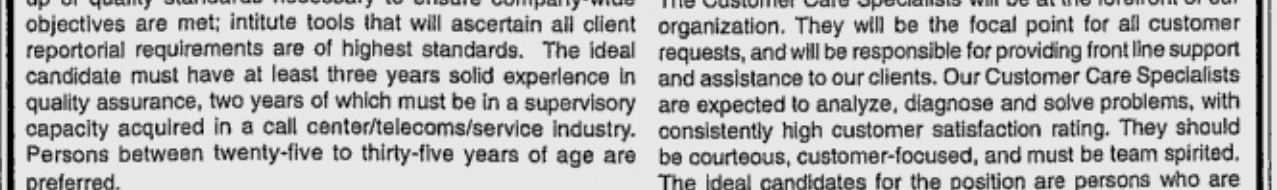

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- ☑ Graduate of Accounting/CPA
- ☑ Preferably with experience on auditing
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PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue
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(We will reply to qualified applicants only)

An Asian media company is preparing a feasibility study on behalf of a documentary filmmaker. The documentary will focus on the livelihood of Muslim and other minority Filipinos, particularly those in the autonomous region of Muslim Mindanao and members of other minority or immigrant groups. The documentary will examine how minorities and immigrants in the Philippines view their economic prospects in comparison to the Christian majority and citizens by birth. We will also examine local views regarding the effectiveness of aid programs instituted by either the central government or foreign aid associations.

We are looking for intelligent, motivated individuals who can act as **translators**, **research assistants**, and **area experts**. Applicants should be of the Islamic faith. Ability in English/Tagalog and either the Tausug, Maranao or Yakan dialects preferred. Ability in Farsi, Arabic, Urdu or other Mid-Eastern and South Asian languages is a major plus, given the project's dual emphasis on the immigrant population and the southern region. Those selected will be offered generous compensation packages, including potential travel benefits and performance bonuses.

Please submit your resumé to the attention of:

Production Manager
Golden Rubicon International
28th Floor, Tower 2, The Enterprise Center
6766 Ayala Avenue, corner Paseo de Roxas
Makati City, Philippines

Resumés can also be sent to fax number **632 886 5008** or
E-mail: production@goldenrubicon.com

ATTENTION SENIOR AND JUNIOR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES & BRAND/PRODUCT MANAGERS

If you have what it takes or think you're one who can really deliver, rising ad agency might want to have you as part of its Account Management team.

At least 1 year ad agency experience for junior AE's. 3-year agency experience for senior AE's. Former or present brand/product managers may also apply.

Send your resume now to:
masterminds-asia communications, inc.
suite 1605, jollibee plaza, emerald avenue
ortigas center, pasig city 1600
e-mail: riley@masterminds-asia.com

SYKES SM

With 40 call centers worldwide, Sykes is a global leader in providing customer and technical support services for many of the world's best known companies. From its Manila Call center, Sykes currently supports 18 clients in 6 languages, handling the transactions throughout Asia, Europe and the USA.

Our recent expansion includes the provision of Financial Advisors for one of the world's leading global travel, financial and network services provider. Due to this, we are in immediate need of highly qualified:

Financial Advisors

Candidates must be:

- College graduate preferably Accounting, Financial Management and other Business-related courses
- Work experience in Financial Auditing, Stock Brokerage, Portfolio Management and Financial Services is an advantage
- Excellent reading comprehension skills, problem solving and data analysis skills
- Has the ability to absorb and utilize complex information
- Has initiative, an eye for detail and excellent customer service skills
- Effective communication and persuasive ability
- Willing to work on shifting schedule

We offer above industry compensation package and US training to all qualified applicants**

**Qualified applicants will be required to pass the federal and state licenses Series 7, Series 63 or 66, State life, accident and health insurance licenses.

If you think you possess the qualifications and skills that we are looking for, kindly submit your updated resumé along with your NBI Clearance and Transcript of Records ***on or before, 15 March 2002*** *to the* ***Human Resources Department*** *4/F SMPC Building, St. Francis Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City 1550. You can also send it via e-mail to hrd@man.ph.sykes.com*

Nakakasabay ka ba sa ikot ng mundo?

Survive changes at work and in the world

Attend the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER People *at* Work *Live!* Seminar Series on Change Management

March 18, 2002 (Monday)
MANAGING WORK-RELATED STRESS
Tita Datu Puangco, President, Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, Inc., will discuss the sources of stress in the workplace and how living the present moment will help you achieve more with less strain. She will share the key to enjoying work which is living "the rainbow life" to ensure an integrated and balanced life.

March 19, 2002 (Tuesday)
SURVIVING WORKPLACE CHANGE
Lirio O. Mapa, Vice President, Center for Leadership and Change, Inc., will talk about how you can prepare yourself for changes. She will also tackle the paradigms and principles that can help you survive workplace changes.

March 20, 2002 (Wednesday)
LEADING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE
Mark Mackenzie, Managing Principal, S & G International Consulting, Inc., will focus on how you can lead change, not just from the senior management perspective, but from those in all levels of the organization. He will discuss how different types of change are identified, measured and managed by all employees.

TIME: 5:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
VENUE: Santiago Hall, Mezzanine, Equitable PCIB Tower 1, Makati Ave. cor. H. V. de la Costa St., Makati City, Metro Manila.

REGISTRATION FEES PER SESSION: P250 (balcony), P300 (orchestra) and P350 (patron). Early bird discount of 10%. Limited discounted tickets for teachers, gov't. employees (25%) & students (50%)

REGISTER at the following Inquirer Classified Ads branches: Main-Pasong Tamo, Makati City, 897-8808/ 897-2535; G/F Atrium Bldg., Makati Ave., Makati City 811-4361/ 811-4370/ 811-4012; St. Anthony's Bldg., Aurora Blvd, Cubao, Quezon City 421-1420/421-0343; SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City 635-0219/ 637-2008; G/F Trinity Bldg., 636 T.M. Kalaw St., Manila 527-3342/ 528-0183/ 527-6357 *or at the* **Optimus Managers and Advisors,Inc.** *office* 2nd flr., Benjamin I Bldg., 62 Sgt. Esguerra St. cor. Mo. Ignacia Ave. (across ABS-CBN), South Triangle, Quezon City 414-0186, 414-0587.

Brought to you by companies who care for people at work:

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An event organized by OPTIMUS MANAGERS & ADVISORS, INC.

ENZI CORPORATION

Financial Management Services Company

We need the following immediately:

ACCOUNTANTS/FINANCIAL ANALYST
Business graduate, major in Accounting; Computer literate

COMPUTER PROGRAMMERS
Computer Science degree; Microsoft Programs/Applications

OFFICE STAFF COLLECTORS
At least Second Year College; Can drive four wheel or two wheel vehicles

ENCODERS
Proficient in computer operations;College graduate

SECRETARY/RECEPTIONIST
College graduate; Computer literate

We offer highly competitive compensation packages. If you are hardworking, willing to work long hours, honest and with good personality, join our organization.

Apply in person at:
ENZI CORPORATION
10th Floor One San Miguel Avenue Tower, Shaw Boulevard, San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel. No. 687-5556

A progressive international deep sea fishing company and one of the top 500 Corporations in the Philippines is in need of the following:

Position:

SENIOR SYSTEMS ANALYST/ PROGRAMMER

JUNIOR SYSTEMS ANALYST/ PROGRAMMER

Requirements:

1. College graduate
2. Extensive experience in the following:
   - System Design
   - LAN Environment
   - Database Programming, DOS-FOXPRO and Visual Basic
   - Proficiency in MS Office Applications

Salary:

Commensurate with ability and track record

This is an urgent requirement. Interested applicants may apply personally at:

Human Resources Department
Frabelle Fishing Corporation
1051 North Bay Boulevard
Navotas, Metro Manila
Tel. 281-2909

Or: Send Bio-data/credentials to mathy@frabelle.net

TECHNICAL TRAINING ASST. MANAGER

- Graduate of Industrial Engineering or Behavioral Science/Psychology
- At least two years Asst. Manager experience or four years Supervisory experience in similar capacity
- Computer literate
- Excellent interpersonal & communication skills
- Can design, develop and conduct training programs
- Male or Female
- Age limit is 35

ENGINEERING GRADUATES BATCH 2001/2002

- Graduates of Electronics & Communications, Computer, Mechanical, Electrical, Industrial, and Chemical Engineering
- Should possess leadership qualities, teamwork, and are hardworking
- Male or Female
- Age limit is 23

WAREHOUSE GROUP LEADER OR PRODUCT CONTROL ASSISTANT

- Graduate of any 4-year Business course
- At least 1 year experience in warehousing and packing operations an advantage
- Must be proficient in Windows applications
- Male or Female
- Age limit is 26

COMPANY NURSE

- Will be responsible for the curative, palliative, preventive, rehabilitative and administrative services of employees' welfare
- Graduate of BS Nursing, licensed
- Must be service-oriented and willing to work on shifts
- Must be proficient in Windows applications
- Female, age limit is 28

HRD ASSISTANTS

- Will be assigned either in background checking or training
- Graduates of Psychology or Behavioral Science
- At least 1 year related experience preferred
- Must be proficient in Windows applications
- Male or female, age limit is 24

Fujitsu Computer Products is a leading manufacturer of hard disk drives and magneto-resistive heads. After almost six years of commercial operations, we now have 7,000 employees. We were awarded by PEZA as Best Employer Hall of Fame by being Best Employer for the years 1997 to 1999. Successful candidates will be based in Canlubang, Laguna. Shuttle buses to and from the site are available even for Metro Manila residents. Please send your resumes to: The Assistant Vice President, HRD & General Affairs Department, Fujitsu Computer Products Corporation of the Philippines, SEPZ, Carmelray Industrial Park, Canlubang, Calamba, Laguna, or email to: lgarcia@fcpp.fujitsu.co.jp. You may also apply personally in business attire, every M-W-F at 9 AM.

A major player in the manufacturing and marketing of Processed Meats and other consumer goods is inviting highly qualified Sales Managers to join the Team as its:

NATIONAL SALES MANAGER

The Position... shall manage the sales and distribution of the Company's varied products nationwide.

The Person... we are looking for should be dynamic, a hands-on manager, and results-oriented. He must be between 30-40 years old with at least 5 years track record as a Sales Manager in consumer sales. We prefer individuals with entrepreneurial spirit who can manage a sales team of more than 200 people. We will give preference to individuals who have exceptional skills in planning, decision making and in communication. He is expected to travel around the country most of the time.

Our Offer... to the successful candidate is a very competitive remuneration package per annum, a car plan, allowances and other perks befitting the position. Those receiving less than P750,000.00 per annum need not apply.

Interested parties are requested to submit their resumé, together with 2x2 ID picture. Only shortlisted candidates will be asked to come for the interviews. All applications shall be treated with utmost confidentiality. Application letters are to be mailed to:

Code: QC 2002-30
Philippine Daily Inquirer
St. Anthony's Building
891 Aurora Boulevard corner Oxford Street
Cubao, Quezon City

IMMEDIATE HIRING

SERVICE MANAGER

A reputable, growth-oriented service Company invites highly motivated, assertive, and result-oriented candidates with the following qualifications:

- Male, 40 years old and above
- Engineering graduate
- Licensed Mechanical Engineer would be an advantage
- Must have at least 3 years experience with a cleaning company or in hotel housekeeping
- With excellent interpersonal skills and proven leadership qualities
- Accomplished in both written and verbal communication
- Computer literate

Attractive compensation package awaits the successful candidate.

Please send your resumé with a recent photo to:

Box KA-014-02 CS
c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer
Classified Ads Division
G/F Trinity Building, #636 T.M. Kalaw Street
Ermita, Manila
E-mail: jm1@inquirer.com.ph
Subject: CS

Are you up for the challenge?

Global Sources leads the field in creating and facilitating global trade between buyers and suppliers. We provide worldwide trading partners with the right information, at the right time, in the right format.

Our winning team of 1,800 people worldwide is skilled, tech-savvy and thrives in a dynamic, cross-cultural environment. If this sounds like you, then we are currently looking for:

Marketing Executive

You will provide marketing support to our partners overseas and take charge of customized marketing initiatives roll out. You must have 3 years solid experience in direct marketing and site content management. Strong project management skills and good copywriting skills are also necessary qualifications. Those who enjoy being given a great deal of responsibility to grow and learn will have a marked advantage.

Technical Documentation Officer

You will be responsible in the actual writing of documents and assist in the development of templates and standards required for project documentation. Ideally the candidate must have a proven track record in journalism, specializing in technical writing, or 2 years of comparable work experience. Those with first class English communication skills, a keen eye for details and a relevant degree will have a distinct advantage.

A competitive remuneration package and a truly challenging, international and dynamic work environment awaits the right candidates. Interested parties should send their resume and contact details to any of the following:

Corporate Human Resources
online: career.globalsources.com
e-mail: asmhr@globalsources.com
fax: (632) 892-4087
post: P.O. Box 4597, MCPO, Makati City

global sources
www.globalsources.com

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
JOBMarket ONLINE
VISIT US AT **www.jobmarketonline.com**

HARIBON FOUNDATION

"Protecting Nature, Preserving Life"

Haribon Foundation is a non-stock, non-profit and membership organization committed to nature conservation through community empowerment and scientific excellence. Organized in 1972 as a bird watching society, **Haribon** is known to be the pioneer environmental organization in the Philippines. For this year, we invite dedicated professionals to join our growing family to occupy the following positions.

LEGAL OFFICER (full time)
- male or female Bachelor of Legal Law graduate (board-passer)
- units earned in Environmental Science subjects an advantage
- equipped with above average research, verbal and written communications skills
- must posses above average interpersonal, analytical and platform skills
- must have excellent knowledge in legislation and local government
- willing to travel to remote areas in the country
- computer literate
- at least one (1) year work experience

Information, Education and Communications (IEC) COORDINATOR
- male or female Bachelor of Communication Arts graduate
- equipped with excellent verbal and written communications skills
- computer literate
- at least five (5) years experience in information materials production, public relations, and communication resource management
- exposure in environmentally-related task an advantage

Information, Education and Communications (IEC) SPECIALIST
- male or female Bachelor of Communication Arts/ Community Development graduate
- equipped with excellent verbal and written communications skills
- computer literate
- willing to travel to remote areas
- at least five (5) years experience in IEC for the environment targetting Local Government Units (LGUs), communities, educators and legislators
- at least five (5) years experience in IEC materials development and production

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY
- male or female college graduate
- equipped with above average interpersonal, verbal and written communications skills
- must be well organized, systematic, innovative and persevering
- computer literate
- working knowledge in research, fund raising, and or proposal making an advantage
- willing to work long hours
- at least two (2) years experience in the same capacity

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT
- male or female college graduate
- equipped with average interpersonal, verbal and written communications skills
- must be well organized, systematic, innovative and persevering
- computer literate
- at least one (1) year experience in the same capacity

MESSENGER
- male or female college graduate
- equipped with average interpersonal and oral skills
- must be willing to work long hours
- able to drive (motorcycle and car - manual transmission) an advantage
- at least two (2) years experience in the same capacity

Due to urgency of requirements,qualified applicants may send their comprehensive resume through mail or submit it to the head office on or before March 15, 2002. Only short-listed candidates will be called for an interview.

Human Resources Officer
Haribon Foundation for the Conservation of Natural Resources, Inc.
No. 9 Malingap cor. Malumanay Sts., Teacher's Village, Diliman Quezon City
For Inquiries Call: 925 3332 loc 42

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

The country's leading newspaper is looking for:

LIBRARY ASSISTANT

- College graduate
- 1-2 years experience in this job or any related job
- Knowledge of basic library keeping principles
- Filing skills, classifying skills

Mail your application letter, comprehensive resumé to:

HR MANAGEMENT SERVICES HEAD
Philippine Daily Inquirer
Chino Roces Avenue (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner
Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City

E-mail: recruitment@inquirer.com.ph

BISMAC

A long established distributing company with offices nationwide is looking for:

PRODUCT MANAGER

- Graduate of advance degree in Marketing, Business Administration or Economics, preferably with some background in Finance
- Excellent communication and management skills and computer literate
- At least 5 years experience in higher sales, working management with account executives and supervisors reporting to him/her
- Can develop strategic marketing plan, product development and forecasting ability
- Preferably but not necessary with hands-on experience in business machines, banking equipment
- Willing to travel and start ASAP

MRSD/BUDGET STAFF

- Female, single not more than 30 years old with pleasing personality and of good moral character
- Graduate of any business course with accounting background
- With good analytical skills and above average scholastic records
- Familiar with Windows 98, MS Office and any database software

PROGRAMMERS

- Not over 30 years old
- Fast learner, willing to travel and can work long hours
- Proficient in database concept and with one year experience in VB6 (including SQL, ADO, RDO, DAO)
- Knowledge in Windows API (including TAPI & MAPI) and various encryption techniques a definite advantage

SALES EXECUTIVE

- Male or Female, 21 years old and above
- Graduate of any business or computer course
- Excellent communication skills and willing to learn
- An advantage if with knowledge in selling POS/ECR machines, banking equipment or selling to Government Accounts

Interested applicants may send their Application Letter, 2x2 picture and Curriculum Vitaé or may apply personally at:

BUSINESS MACHINES CORPORATION
Carson Bldg., Orense cor. Del Carmen Sts.
Guadalupe Nuevo, Makati City
Tel. Nos. 8823355-64

Email: bismac@bismac.com.ph
(NO ATTACHMENT PLEASE)

HIRING ON GOING

For Manpower Pooling
(Local Employment)

All applicants for deployment/ assignment to respective employers-clients

Factory Workers (male & female)
Hotel Personnels (male & female)
Family & Company Drivers (male & female - valid driver's license)
Restaurant Cooks, Waiters, Waitress, Kitchen Staff-worker (male & female)
Food Chains Service Crews, Waiters/ Resscounter Personnel, Kitchen Staff-worker (male & female)
Messengerial and Liaison Staffs for Banks and other companies (male & female)
Construction workers for various positions (male & female)
Salesman & Saleslady for malls, dept. stores and supermarkets (male & female)
Bagger, Promodizer, Merchandizer for various product manufacturers (male & female)
Janitorial, Messengerial, Maintenance workers for various companies (male & female)
Sales & Marketing Personnel for different companies (male & female)
Managerial and Executive positions for various companies (male & female)
Household help with good background (male & female)
Management trainee/s and OJTs also accepted (male & female)

EMPLOYED OR NOT EMPLOYED MAY APPLY AT:

PARTOLINS MANPOWER & EMPLOYMENT AGENCY
Unit 19 Cluster 12, Bliss Flexihomes Rosario, Pasig City
Telephone: (632) 656-2403 connecting all departments

DOLE LICENSE NO.: M-02-00-031

PROVINCIAL APPLICANTS ARE ALSO WELCOME

URGENT: LIAISON OFFICER/MESSENGER
(male, 20-30 years S or M, exp POEA, DOLE, OWWA, SEC, DFA, EMBASSIES, AIRLINES

ASIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT

The Asian Institute of Management is looking for qualified individuals to fill up the following positions:

PROGRAM MANAGERS

MBA or Master Degree holder, computer literate, with excellent oral and written communication skills and preferably with exposure in program administration in a managerial level. Successful candidate should be able to relate well with different kinds of people and shall handle the administrative, financial, marketing and operational aspect of assigned program.

PROGRAM MANAGERS FOR INSTITUTIONAL INVESTOR RELATIONS

Will assess the market and institutional environment and identify program and project prospects. He/She will develop and implement strategies for partnership and resource generation. He/She must have the ability to work with a wide range of partners, including senior members of Faculty and Administration. Experience with international donor-funded projects is preferred. The individual must competently identify and seize opportunities, analyze and decisively act on competitive position, and anticipate implications. Candidates must possess strong program management, verbal and written communication skills, ideally possess a minimum of 5-years development-oriented or academe-oriented professional experience. Master's degree in the fields of Business, Social Sciences, Economics, or Public Administration is desirable.

SALES MANAGER

The successful applicants will be tasked to handle corporate accounts with rooms and conference requirements. This entails tapping and sourcing new accounts and servicing existing clients to cover both private and government offices. The person will report directly to the Director of Sales. Female, preferably Hotel & Restaurant Management graduate with at least one (1) year Sales experience in hotel rooms and banquets, knowledge of Fidelio will be a plus. She should be computer literate, results-oriented, and a team player.

These are urgent requirements.
Only those who are qualified and can start immediately are encourage to send their resumé, transcript of records and 2x2 picture to the Office for the Human Resource Development, Asian Institute of Management, 123 Paseo De Roxas Street, Makati City.

ofs

ofs furniture inc.

a leading furniture manufacturing & trading firm invites competent professionals

SALES/ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

The Job
Develops new business and provide sales/technical support to existing clients. Handles sales and marketing plans, product presentations and sales proposals.

The Requirements
- Female, 28 to 35 years old
- Must at least have 5 years of sales experience
- Graduate of Architecture, Interior Design or Marketing
- With experience in selling high-end office furniture an advantage
- Excellent communication skills
- Highly motivated, hardworking, honest, dynamic, mature, results-oriented and works well under pressure
- Customer oriented and a strong team player

PRODUCTION ASSISTANT

The Job
Handles administrative work, including man-hour recording, purchasing, inventory, receiving and withdrawal of materials. Production scheduling, product costing, and time study.

The Requirements
- Male/Female, 28 to 35 years old
- Graduate of Industrial Engineering
- Customer service oriented
- Knowledge in full-sizing an advantage
- Hardworking, honest, highly-motivated, results- oriented, and works well under pressure.

RECEPTIONIST/SECRETARY

The Job
Handles administrative and secretarial tasks such as answering telephones, preparation of business correspondences, keeping appointments, typing, filing and record keeping.

The Requirements
- Female, 23 to 30 years old
- Graduate of any 4-year course from a reputable school
- Must have at least two years related work experience
- Articulate, hardworking, honest, highly-motivated, results-oriented
- Organized, has keen eye on details and works well under pressure

Send your comprehensive resume and recent photograph to the **Office Manager, OFS Furniture Inc.** G/F State Condominium 1 Bldg., 186 Salcedo St. Legaspi Village, Makati City or email at ealarcon@ofsofs.com. **We will respond only to qualified applicants.**

HIRING

A leading national drug manufacturer with toll manufacturing, capsule printing, blister packing, and laboratory service (TLC, gas chrom, spectro, HPLC) expertise invites you to be part of its continued growth as:

Operations Manager

- Licensed pharmacist
- *Must* possess extensive experience in all aspects of pharmaceutical manufacturing operations including BFAD processes

Liquid Production Supervisor

- Licensed pharmacist
- *Must* possess supervisory experience in liquid production set-up

Quality Control Analysts

- Licensed pharmacist, chemical engineer or chemist
- *Must* possess working knowledge in HPLC, spectro, TLC gas chromatograph and other laboratory equipment

Production Technicians

- *Must* be experienced in the operation of either auto capsule filling, blister or tabletting machines

Applicants should be willing to be assigned at intervals in Quezon City and Malolos, Bulacan plants. Compensation package commensurate to experience.

Due to urgency of requirements, qualified applicants are requested to apply in person starting 11 March 2002 with comprehensive resume, 2x2 colored photo, NBI/police clearance and credentials at:

AD-Drugstel Pharma Lab. Inc.
75 Tandang Sora Avenue
Quezon City
Tel. 9207366/4537596 to 97

The country's emerging premiere crab and seafood resto is NOW HIRING for existing and new branches...

We need young, committed, experienced and professional talents to fill in the following positions...

The Red Crab SEAFOOD & STEAKS

RESTAURANT OPERATIONS MANAGERS/ SUPERVISORS

- Preferably HRM graduates (or any management/marketing degree)
- At least 3 to 5 years experience as supervisors in fine dining restaurant
- 28 to 35 years old (energetic female talents preferred)

HEAD COOKS, COOKS and ASSISTANT COOKS

- At least 5 years experience in reputable hotels and/or restaurants
- Great passion for working and learning new recipes

PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS
PROFESSIONAL DINING STAFF

Interested applicants are required to submit or email their comprehensive resumé or bio-data sheets to :

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
The Red Crab Seafood and Steaks Restaurant
536 Remedios Street, Malate
Fax No.: 400-9980
Email: rmagdaluyo@pacific.net.ph

JOIN A GROWING BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

Two opportunities exist to join the Secretariat of a dynamic and growing business organization that works closely with both the private and public sectors in the Philippines, Australia & New Zealand. Both positions are demanding and require people with well developed experience, communications skills and work ethics.

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

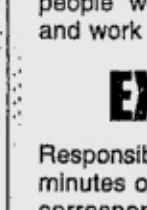
Responsibilities include the recording & timely preparation of minutes of Board & Committee meetings, preparation of correspondence, general administration and bookkeeping. Prior experience using computer based accounting software will be highly regarded.

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES COORDINATOR

Responsibilities include liaison with members; recruitment of new members from Filipino and foreign businesses; writing and publication of media releases, newsletters, electronic bulletins & Membership Directory; website maintenance; assisting Membership & Sponsorship Committees. Highly developed written and interpersonal communications skills are essential.

Both positions are based in Makati City and report to the Executive Director. Initial remuneration will be based on qualifications & experience and on performance thereafter.

Written applications by mail to P.O. Box 4672 Makati Central Post Office, Makati City. Please enclose a statement of qualifications & experience, references and a recent photograph. Applications due not later than 5:00pm on 22 March 2002.



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VISIT US AT www.jobmarketonline.com

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING!!!

Importer / Distributor urgently needs:

SALES MANAGER

- With sufficient background in sales, forecasting, and planning
- At least 2 years experience in dealing with supermarkets, CVS, groceries, and other retail channel
- Must have good leadership qualities to handle sales representatives and staff
- Must be highly motivated and action-oriented
- Good oral and written communication skills

SALES REPRESENTATIVES

- Must have at least 2 years experience in selling semi-perishable consumer goods to supermarkets, CVS, groceries, and other retail channel
- Must be highly motivated and action-oriented
- Good oral and written communication skills

For qualified candidates, please call **NYMFA** at **812-3601** to **06.**

http://www.vipertechonline.com

NOW HIRING !!!
. Account Manager
. adequate experience in sales or marketing
. fluency in English is a must

NOW POOLING !!!
. Management Trainees
. Web / Animation / Print Designers
. Web Programmers

Send your resumes / portfolio to:

VIPER TECHNOLOGIES, INC.
Suite 1003 Antel Global Corporate Center
Dona Julia Vargas Avenue, Ortigas Center
Pasig City, Philippines 1600

or email:

iwanttowork@vipertechonline.com

vipertechnologiesinc.

we create. we innovate. we deliver.

A growing Christian school in Pasig City needs highly-competent teachers for

Pre-school
Language and Reading
Math

Qualifications:
- must be a born-again Christian
- graduate of B.S. Early Childhood Education; B.S. Elementary Education
- passed the Licensure Examination for Teachers (LET) or at least about to take the LET on August 2002

Applicants must submit the following:
- resumé including 3 character references from school and/ or office
- transcript of records
- two letters of recommendation
- letter of endorsement from the pastor
- LET rating, if applicable

Send the requirements to:

THE DIRECTRESS
P.O. Box 13469
Ortigas Center Post Office
1605 Pasig City

MARY HELP OF CHRISTIANS MONTESSORI
Margarita St., Pasong Tala, Dasmariñas, Cavite
Tel. Nos. (046) 850-35-59/416-12-76-77; Fax: (046) 416-12-78

is now accepting applicants for

PRESCHOOL, GRADE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

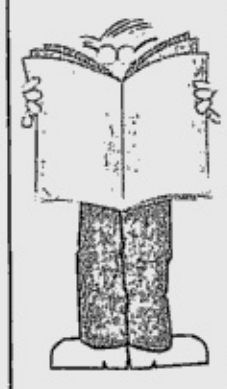
For School Year 2002-2003

Interested applicants may apply in person and bring the following requirements:

resumé with picture and application letter, transcript of records, photocopy of LET results and other credentials

Apply at the Principal's Office:
Monday to Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
For inquiries, please call (046) 416-12-77

Where you find the best.



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Question :

1. Am I aggressive enough to sell successfully Yellow Pages ad spaces?
2. Am I ready to work anywhere in the Philippines?
3. Am I honest? Dedicated to work? Willing to be trained under the tutelage of the best in industry?

ANSWER :

If your answer is **YES** for all the questions, then you are the **ONE**. Be one of our

SALES REPRESENTATIVES
Code : SR

Our search begins with someone who has the passion to succeed in the world of yellow pages and internet sales advertising. College graduate. Ideal candidate must be male with good communication skills and strong self confidence. He must be able to express himself both in English and Filipino with ease. The candidate must be willing to do field work. No experience necessary.

We are also in need of the following :

SALES SUPERVISOR
Code : SS

Mature and experienced to handle 8-9 Sales Representatives.

TELEPHONE COLLECTION ASSISTANT
Code : TCA

College graduate, Female. Not over 30 years old with at least 1 year related experience. She must have good oral communication skills and can handle selling and collection of ad spaces through the telephone.

DEPARTMENT SECRETARY
Code : DS

Qualified candidate must be single, college graduate, computer literate (MS Word, MS Excel, & Powerpoint) and could type at a speed not less than 40 words per minute.

COLLECTOR
Code : COL

Preferably with one (1) year related work experience, with good moral conduct, with valid professional driver's license for motorcycle use.

Please send or handcarry your resume' with recent picture or E-mail us at :

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
7 Flr. Salamin Bldg., Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City
E-mail : **besttel3@broline.com**

THE Little gym®

The Little Gym
Total Development for Your Child.

The Little Gym Mandaluyong
Level 5, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
EDSA cor. Shaw Blvd.
Mandaluyong

The Little Gym Alabang
Level 3, Festival Supermall
Filinvest Corporate City
Alabang, Muntinlupa

The Little Gym Makati
Level 1, HatchAsia GlobalCity Center
31st St. cor.2nd Ave., E-Square
Bonifacio Global City, Taguig

The Little Gym East Quezon City
2nd Floor, Shoppersville Supermarket
355 Katipunan Avenue
Loyola Heights, Quezon City

The Little Gym® is a franchised children's fitness and development center where motor development, recreational gymnastics, sports skills development, and martial arts classes are provided in a safe non-competitive environment. The curriculum-based physical, social and intellectual development programs are designed by child development experts in the United States.

Our enrollment is growing fast, and we need more great teachers for all our four locations. The most qualified candidates will be required to complete successfully a specialized The Little Gym training program. Instructors who complete training and pass assessment would have the privilege of being among the highest paid teachers in the country. All our full-time staff have health insurance benefits.

Awesome Recreational Gymnastics and Pre-School Teachers For Immediate Hiring

We are looking for college degree holders between 21 and 35 years old who speak English fluently and have excellent communication skills, have high energy levels, and are physically fit. They must have a professional work ethic, be habitually punctual, friendly, great with kids, and enjoy teaching and being with kids. Those with backgrounds or experience in early childhood education, child development, special education, gymnastics, or marketing are preferred. Those who are punctuality-challenged and unenthusiastic need not apply.

If you're the one we're looking for, please send your application letter, resumé & passport-sized photo BY MAIL to any of our branches before March 25, 2002.

Only the most qualified will be called in for interviews after Holy Week. Applications in person will not be entertained at this time.

Needed Immediately!

- **Male or female, 25 to 50 years old**
- **At least college level**
- **Hardworking, Achiever, Outspoken**
- **P 5,000.00 Monthly Allowance + Basic Comm. & Incentives (FP's)**
- **P 15,000 Monthly Allowance + Basic Comm. & Incentives (UM's)**

Please apply personally & bring resume at

NIPPON LIFE PHILS. Legaspi Branch

3/F Liberty Bldg. A. Arnaiz St. Makati - 8173469/8173481 to 83

(M–F 9AM–5PM)

SALES AND MARKETING PERSONNEL

(For Regular Employment)

Preferably with the following qualifications:

- Male/Female, 25 years and above
- Attractive with a strong/confident personality
- Experience in sales and marketing of food products would be an advantage
- Good command of English

Attractive packages for the successful applicants.

Send the copy of the ad, resumé complete with recent photograph, and contact no. to:

Suite 1902 Antel 2000 Corporate Center
121 Valero Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City

(Resumé should be submitted not later than 15th March 2002)

All short listed candidates will be notifed by the 18th March 2002.

A rare opportunity in a sunrise industry

Interested parties should apply in person not later than March 15, 2002 to:

The Recruitment Office
2900 Faraday Street
cor. South Superhighway
Makati City
Tel. Nos. : 889-4157 or 843-5593
Fax No. : 843-5593
E-mail : Manila_HRD@inod.com

A premier provider of digital content outsourcing services invites applicants for the position of...

ACCOUNTANTS

To qualify, the candidates must be an Accounting graduate with good academic record, male/female, not over 30 years old with at least 3-5 years work experience in payroll, receivables, taxation, inventory, fixed assets and general accounting. He/she must be computer literate (knowledge in Foxdatabase is a must for payroll positions), with good organizational and communication skills, with a positive work attitude and an analytical mind. He/she must be capable of working under pressure with minimum supervision.

CUSTOMER SERVICE ASSISTANT

As CS Assistant, you will be responsible for manning the phone system, assist the CS managers in addressing customer concerns, collect info/data and prepare reports.

To qualify, you must be a graduate of any four-year course, preferably Communications or Marketing, female, at least 21-23 years old. You must be computer literate and possess above-average oral and written English skills. Willing to work on graveyard shift.

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INNODATA offers above-industry incentives and benefits which include superior compensation, paid leaves, and quarterly rice subsidy among others.

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Hantec Investment Holdings Ltd.

Hantec Investment Holdings Ltd. is a publicly listed company in the Hong Kong Stock Exchange providing service in the financial market. Its wholly owned subsidiary office is currently on its ongoing expansion and is in need of top caliber individuals for the following positions:

Marketing Officers (MO)
Investment Analyst/Consultant (IA/C)
Executive Assistant (EA)

Responsibilities:
The successful individual would be tasked to broaden clientele base, analyze and provide technical and fundamental market recommendations, and implement marketing plans.

Qualifications for MO & IA:
- Male or Female between 20-35 years of age
- Graduate from top local or international university
- Excellent communication and written skills in English, Filipino (and/or Chinese)
- Relevant financial experience is preferred
- Established account relationship with high net worth private and institutional clients
- Pleasing and impressive personality
- With good analytical mind and can work with minimum supervision
- With high inclination to Marketing
- Fresh graduates are welcome to apply

Qualifications for EA:
- College graduate with good moral character
- Female, 20 to 35 years old
- Accounting experience an advantage
- Experience in office administration work, including clerical & secretarial function
- Computer literate & well-organized

Kindly forward your application letter, resumé & recent 2x2 photo to:

UNIT 907 B West Tower, Phil. Stock Exchange Building, Exchange Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1600 or
Email: hantec@access.net.ph

JOB OPENING

0 TEACHER
(English, Math, Science, AP, Filipino, Arts)
- BSE/BSED graduate / 18 units in Education
- PRC license / teaching experience preferred

❷ CAT COMMANDANT

❸ GUIDANCE COUNSELOR
- BS Psychology / Christian Counseling graduate

❹ PAYROLL PERSONNEL
- Accounting graduate

Applicants should be of Good Christian Moral Character.
Bring resumé and transcript of records to...

JUBILEE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
4th Street, Doña Hemady Avenue
New Manila, Quezon City

Beacon International School

This thriving new school is looking to recruit additional teachers for **school year beginning 2002-03**. Vacancies exist for:

- **Elementary School Teachers Grades 1 - 5**

Our team of excellent staff is sourced from local and expatriate backgrounds. If you think that you have the qualifications, experience and qualities required to succeed in this environment then we would like to hear from you.

In addition we have **immediate vacancies** for:

- **Receptionist**
- **School Nurse**
- **Teacher's Aide**

Applicants are requested to send a CV and a letter of application together with a recent photo, stating clearly the post applied for to the address given below. All applicants should be fluent in written and spoken English and hold a relevant degree. Applicants for teaching posts are also required to provide a brief statement of their educational philosophy.

Please post applications to:

Mr. Lawrence M. Buck, Headmaster, Beacon International School, PCPD Building, 2332 Pasong Tamo Extension, Taguig, M.M.
Applications may also be faxed to 810-5046 or emailed to beacon@uslagate.net

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We are one of the leading Pumps and Motors Suppliers. We are in need of highly motivated

SALES ENGINEERS

with the following qualifications:

1. Male or female
2. 25-35 years old
3. Graduate of Mechanical, Industrial or Electrical Engineering
4. Experience in industrial sales preferred
5. With good communication skills

Apply in person with complete resumé and transcript of records to **Triumph Machinery Corp.** at No. 260 Vito Cruz Extension, San Antonio Village, Makati City. Tel. Nos. 896-7961, 896-8904. Look for Ms. Janet Gamboa.

This ad needs some pizazz!

Brilliant Art Director needed...BADLY!

If you're a female Art Director with 3 or more years of agency experience and a portfolio that dazzles, fax your resumé to *The Advertising Agency* at 636-7063

IMMEDIATE JOB OPENING

IN PSBANK TOWER

IF YOU ARE:

- COLLEGE GRADUATE of at least 4-year course from reputable schools and universities
- Energetic men and women of at least 20-38 years of age (cheerful, aggressive and independent minded)
- Fluent in both oral and written English & Filipino language
- Possesses a mature disposition and able to work with minimum supervision
- Not presently employed or enrolled
- Those who are ready to undergo comprehensive company training and can work at once.

WE OFFER:

- ✓ AN ATTRACTIVE ABOVE AVERAGE COMPENSATION
- ✓ Local and Foreign trips at company's expense
- ✓ A chance to join the ranks of highly paid managers
- ✓ Company sponsored training

APPLY AT:

PSBANK TOWER
8th Floor, Level 8B, Suite 808
Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City
(Infront of Makati Medical Center)

See us for interview on March 11, 12, 13 & 14, 2002 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Please come in proper business attire with two (2) 2x2 size pictures, resumé / biodata, clipping of this ad and 2 valid ID's.

Whirlpool
HOME APPLIANCES

Is currently in need of qualified personnel to fill the position of:

MARKETING SUPERVISOR

Qualifications:

- Male/Female
- With at least 2 years work experience
- To handle Marketing and Promotional activities
- Salary commensurate to experience and ability
- Organized with good communication skills
- Results-oriented can work under pressure & can meet deadlines

SALES SUPPORT ASSISTANT

Qualifications:

- Female not older than 26 years old
- Graduate of 4-year business course
- Knowledgeable in computer applications
- With work experience a plus, can work under pressure
- Responsible, organized and articulate

All interested applicants should submit in person a 2x2 picture, resumé, NBI clearance and transcript of records to:

EXCELLENCE APPLIANCE TECHNOLOGIES, INC.
24 D. TUAZON ST., QUEZON CITY
Tel. No. 7320429
(between 9-11AM only, previous applicants need not apply)

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www.jobmarketonline.com

DAVID'S SALON

THE BEST IN EUROPEAN HAIRDRESSING

The Biggest Salon Group in the Philippines

SKIN SPECIALIST

- ☐ Female 20 years and above
- ☐ Preferably single
- ☐ Must have clear complexion
- ☐ With or without experience
- ☐ Must be a consistent person & with good communication skills
- ☐ Graduate or undergraduate of any medical course
- ☐ Board passer or under board P.T. and Nurses

MASSEURS

- ☐ Preferably with experience but not necessary as training will be provided
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- ☐ Preferably single
- ☐ Female, 20 years and above
- ☐ Must be a consistent person & with a good communication skills
- ☐ Graduate or undergraduate of any course

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

- ☐ Main responsibility is to ensure the efficient and consistent flow of inventory
- ☐ Minimum of 3-5 years of experience in stock, warehousing, receiving and visual merchandising
- ☐ A keen eye on product quality
- ☐ Female, 25-35 years old
- ☐ A sense of ownership
- ☐ Security conscious

LOCKER ATTENDANT

- ☐ Must be between 20-25 years of age
- ☐ Must be at least college level or college graduate of any course
- ☐ Preferably single
- ☐ With experience
- ☐ 5'3" in height, weight must be proportion to height
- ☐ Clear complexion

DRIVER

- ☐ Must be between 25-35 years of age
- ☐ Preferably single
- ☐ Living within Marikina or Montalban Rizal area
- ☐ With previous experience

Interested applicants may come in their business attire from Mondays to Wednesdays every week, at 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m., together with their comprehensive resumé, 2x2 picture and other credentials to the address below:

HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENT
DAVID'S SALON INC.
Cardona St., J.P. Rizal, Makati City
(near Makati City Hall)

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

INVENTORY CLERK

Qualifications:

- ➢ Female (single)
- ➢ 21-25 years old
- ➢ Commerce graduate (any major)
- ➢ Knowledge in computer an advantage
- ➢ New graduates may apply

Send to: **U.P. P.O. BOX 15**
DILIMAN, QUEZON CITY, 1101

- ☑ Comprehensive Resumé
- ☑ Records of Grades
- ☑ 2x2 or 1½ x 1½ ID picture

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www.pctrends.com.ph

PCTrends is a computer parts distributor looking for talented individuals for it' expansion program.

Marketing Assistants
- male/female 20's, Single
- college graduate or undergraduate, preferably with marketing/advertising background
- preferably with experience in marketing and promoting computer parts
- should be highly analytical, creative, aggressive and a fast learner
- to handle marketing and promotional activities
- salary commensurate to experience and ability

Creative Assistant
- responsible for layouts and graphics designs
- knowledgeable in computer graphics software
- related experience in Marketing/Merchandising design (brochures, newsletters and posters)

Dealer Sales Assistant
- to handle dealer inquiries
- must possess excellent communication skills
- willing to do field work
- preferably with experience in dealing with computer resellers/shops
- remuneration includes basic salary plus commission

Logistics Crew
- must be well organized
- can work with minimum supervision
- can work fast and efficiently
- must be computer literate
- to manage dispatching activities

Computer Technician
- male/female, 20s, single
- preferably with existing knowledge in computer parts
- team player and a fast learner
- must have great interest in computers

Interested applicants may apply personally at:
#7 Francisco Court
1st Street, New Manila
Quezon City (Near Gilmore Ave.)
Please bring Resume w/ Picture. Transcript of records.

Tel. Numbers: 727-6449; 727-6142
Email: pctrends@mydestiny.net

A Philippine based company engaged in trading of electrical and hardware items is looking for top caliber individuals who possess the following qualifications:

(1) MANAGEMENT TRAINEE, female, single, and not more than 30 years old; Graduate of any business courses; Knowledgeable in computer - MS Excel/MS Word; Conversant in English and Chinese is an advantage.

(2) SALES EXECUTIVES/ACCOUNT OFFICERS, Male or Female, not more than 30 years old; At least with 2 years in Sales & Marketing of Electrical and Hardware Supplies. Conversant in English and Chinese is an advantage. Aggressive, Resourceful and can work independently.

HIGH SALARY & FREE LUNCH

We require applicants to submit the following documents on Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Rm. 203-205 Federation Center Bldg., Muelle de Binondo St., Binondo, Manila. E-mail: yatai@info.com.ph. Look for Bing Lee.

(1) 2x2 Picture; (2) Resumé; (3) Transcript of Records; and (4) Employment Certificate from previous job.

IMMEDIATE JOB OPENING

VAN SALESMEN (4)
MOTORCYCLE SALESMEN (2)

- ☑ At least Second Year College
- ☑ Must have a valid driver's license
- ☑ Experience an advantage

SALES CLERK

- ☑ Computer literate
- ☑ Good oral and written communication

INTERNAL ACCOUNTANT

- ☑ Must be a CPA
- ☑ Female, not more than 25 years old
- ☑ Computer literate

Interested applicants may apply at:

ProSales Marketing Corporation
103-A P. Tuazon, Cubao, Quezon City
Tel. 721-3861, 721-3869, 721-3867
Look for Mr. Vic Aguas or Mr. Ferdie Valido

BIT WORLDWIDE PHILS., INC.

We are an international freight forwarding company. We are the franchisee/branch office in the Philippines of Bennett International Transport, Inc., of Georgia, U.S.A., with established branches in Asia, Europe and America. We are in need of the following:

IMMEDIATE HIRING

FIVE (5) ACCOUNT EXECUTIVES

- ➢ Male or female with pleasing personality
- ➢ With or without experience in freight forwarding
- ➢ Independent, hardworking, intelligent, diligent, resourceful and able to make things happen
- ➢ Computer literate and preferably college graduate
- ➢ Good in communication

Attractive salary + transportation + high commission await the right candidate. Please come and submit your resumé with passport size picture to:

VICE-PRESIDENT - SALES
BIT Worldwide Phils., Inc.
Ground Floor, XDE Building, 808 Villaver Compound
Quirino Avenue, Tambo, Parañaque City
Tel. Nos.: 853-2075/77/78; Fax No. 852-1204

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

The country's leading newspaper is looking for:

MESSENGER

- College level
- With at least 1 year experience
- Knows how to drive motorcycle, with driver's license (1,2)
- Familiar with road direction in Metro Manila

Mail your application letter, comprehensive resumé to:

HR MANAGEMENT SERVICES HEAD
Philippine Daily Inquirer
Chino Roces Avenue
(formerly Pasong Tamo)
Corner Yague and Mascardo Streets,
Makati City

E-mail: recruitment@inquirer.com.ph

GHD
MANAGEMENT
ENGINEERING
ENVIRONMENT

ENGINEERS

GHD is an international consultancy providing leadership in management, engineering and environmental services with a commitment to sustainable development. GHD is currently seeking Filipino candidates for positions in the Philippines and Middle East.

1. Dams – Senior Resident Engineers and Site Inspectors
2. Water Supply – Principal/Senior Design Engineer and Senior Resident Engineers
3. Wastewater Systems – Principal/Senior Design Engineer and Senior Resident Engineer
4. Road and Highways – Principal/Senior Design Engineer and CAD Designer
5. Senior CAD Operator
6. Principal/Senior MEP Design Engineer and Senior Resident Engineers
7. Principal/Senior Structural Design Engineer and Senior Resident Engineers
8. Graduate Engineers 2001/2002
9. Quality Control Engineers

The applicants for all positions must have strong leadership abilities, be computer literate and have excellent oral and written English communication skills.

Send your curriculum vitae covered by an application letter nominating your preferred position (s) and clearly describing your suitability for the position to:

GHD, 2/F 111 Paseo de Roxas St., Legaspi Village, Makati City or e-mail us at Josephine_Lubo@ghd.com.au

www.ghd.com.au

Previous applicants need not apply.

KINSAN

Are you interested in INTERIOR DECORATION?

Kinsan Collections Inc. is the sister company of KINSAN COLLECTIONS Ltd. in Hong Kong, which supplies fabrics and wallcoverings. KINSAN is the exclusive distributor of well-known brands such as Lorenzo Rubelli, Bises Novita, Osborne & Little and many more. Over the 20 years Kinsan has been in operation, we have supplied materials to most of the 5-star hotels and a long row of private homes in Manila and elsewhere.

We are now in need of a person who is interested to work closely with our clients, mainly the famous Interior Designers in Manila. We are looking for a

SALES EXECUTIVE

The scope of work includes:

- ✓ Maintaining and updating showroom and sample libraries assigned to the different Design Practices.
- ✓ Actively marketing our products to Interior Designers and walk in clients.
- ✓ Coordinating orders and shipments with our suppliers.

You should be a College graduate with:

- ✓ A genuine interest in interior design.
- ✓ Some years experience in Marketing is a bonus.
- ✓ Fluent in English.
- ✓ Computer literate (Microsoft Word, Excel, Access).
- ✓ Driver's license and passport.

We offer: A very exciting work within an area of creativity, giving the opportunity to do business with well-established companies and successful people in our society.

Please send your resumé, with references to the following address:

Kinsan Collections (P) Inc.
G/F Priscilla 100 Building, 2297 Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City

Alternatively, resumés can be submitted via e-mail to:
kinsanph@pacific.net.ph

sunday INQUIRER magazine
GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE
March 10, 2002

The Mavens of Malate

By Gina Abuyuan-Llanes
Photographs by Jim Guiao Punzalan

IT IS way past one in the morning, and Malate is gearing itself up to welcome another wave of revelers. Over at Café Havana on Adriatico St., expats and Latino-lovers shimmy to Bo Razon. Along Julio Nakpil, Colin Mackay holds audience with his after-dinner guests at Sala. On Maria Orosa, the relatively new Ladida is throbbing with a robust crowd, its drag queens waiting on customers "thrown their way" by closest neighbor, bistro-lounge Fidel.

It's a Malate that old-timers will find difficult to recognize. A special spotlight falls on streets Nakpil and Orosa, where a new crop of "quality establishments" has sprouted over the past several months. With the new bars come a different crowd—and a different mood. If one hopes to rediscover the bohemian abandon that once characterized Malate, prepare to be disappointed. The current habitués are more polished, more in control of themselves and their environs. In this new Nakpil/Orosa, you'll be as hard-pressed to find a puddle of vomit as you will a Victoria Court flyer.

More than a few bars have closed down. But stalwarts like Insomnia (on its eighth year) and Sala (on its fourth) remain. Veteran Malate guests can remember that before Insomnia and Sala, there were The Library (20-something years and still going strong along Adriatico); Mr Piggy (RIP); the oft-expired, oft-resurrected Penguin; and the seminal Cocobanana that stood on the site now occupied by Empress Garden on the corner of Remedios/Adriatico. Rewind even further, to the "dark ages" of Malate during the Vietnam War years, when, as Manila Mayor Lito Atienza remembers, "They brought decay, sleazy joints. The most seedy and the most questionable characters prevailed. It was even worse than Ermita. We have erased that page. We don't want it to come back."

But it did come back—briefly, in the form of the young horde that frequented Nakpil/Orosa three to four years ago. Eradicated by NOBRA (the former association of establishments on Nakpil, Orosa, Bocobo, Remedios and Adriatico that controlled the street parties and events, now replaced by ROAM—Restaurant Owners Association of Malate), but with no particular group to watch over the streets where "mindless drinking and debauchery" are most prone to happen, who's to ensure the bad behavior doesn't return?

Markus Schmidt, co-founder of Fidel and Firma, usually so voluble and engaging, hesitates. For the streets of Orosa and Nakpil, he explains, ON Concepts was formed, a group that's come to be known as, "well, how should I say it? It's the Velvet Mafia."

Treated by some of the more romantic types in the Malate scene as a hush-hush piece of info ("Ask carefully, they might get mad," advises one), the Velvet Mafia conjures images of a secret society, meeting clandestinely to determine the fate of the area.

Things couldn't be more to the contrary. Composed of Markus' business partners—Richard Danao, Ricky Toledo, and Chito Vijandre; Raj and soon-to-open Acquario proprietor DJ Montano; and Sala and People's Palace's Colin Mackay, the Velvet Mafia is fast gaining reputation as the new kings—er, queens—of the streets. No one knows for sure who first coined the term, but Chito boldly suggests that it's due to their chutzpah for keeping Nakpil and Orosa alive in their own dogged ways, despite opposition from customers and bar-owners alike. "People kind of regarded us as trendsetters in this area, because we do!" he laughs. "We make things happen here!"

"And also because velvet is (a symbol for being) gay," continues Ricky.

"And because it's soft. Luxe," adds Markus once again.

The "mafia" part is just a catchy appendage, because the six abhor anything violent or ill mannered. It's exactly such hooligan behavior that they fought against with their soft touch—but steel-sharp focus.

The '90s version of the "dark ages" began when, fueled by the ready clientele, new bars invaded the area—ones that sold beer at P50, then P30, then P25, each in a frenetic move to outprice and outsell the next one. Some put up stalls right outside their entrances for customers, many below drinking age, to have easier and swifter access to alcoholic drinks mixed on the spot. Nakpil/Orosa became littered streets and drunken brawls, and establishments with dirty washrooms out for a quick buck.

"That was the Malate 'idea'," describes Chito. "To put up a place and make it look 'bohemian'. Malate cannot be that way anymore. You have to evolve into what society is now after." Ricky explains: "Everybody just wanted to open a bar, like maybe what happened on a strip of Boracay—everybody just wanted in even if they didn't pass the regulations. So many closed."

Concerned about the future of the district, the safety of the streets and the unfair competition posed by the "mobile" bars, "NOBRA urged the mayor to stop the selling of alcohol in the streets," shares Markus. "Once the satellite bars disappeared, the crowds disappeared."

To page 8

This bastion of the bohemian lifestyle, finished? Never, says the "Velvet Mafia" and other unorthodox entrepreneurs, movers and shakers, who are running the show with a soft touch – but undoubtedly sharp focus

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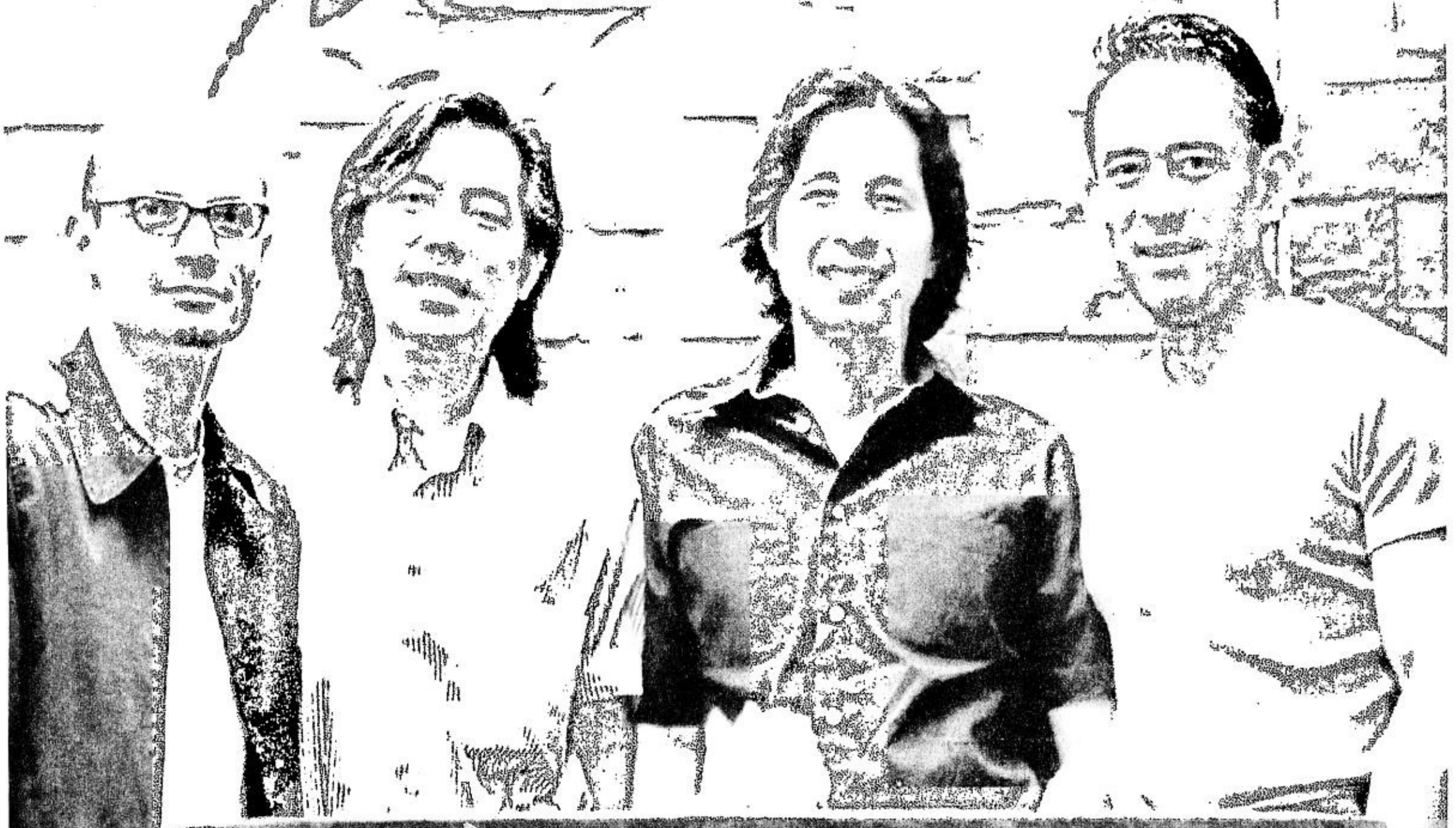
sunday INQUIRER magazine

GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE

March 10, 2002

The Mavens of Malate



By Gina Abuyuan-Llanes
Photographs by Jim Guiao Punzalan

This bastion of the bohemian lifestyle, finished? Never, says the "Velvet Mafia" and other unorthodox entrepreneurs, movers and shakers, who are running the show with a soft touch – but undoubtedly sharp focus

IT'S way past one in the morning, and Malate is gearing itself up to welcome another wave of revelers. Over at Cafe Havana on Adriatico St., expats and Latino-lovers shimmy to Bo Razon. Along Julio Nakpil, Colin Mackay holds audience with his after-dinner guests at Sala. On Maria Orosa, the relatively new Ladida is throbbing with a robust crowd, its drag queens waiting on customers thrown their way" by closest neighbor, bistro-lounge Kai.

It's a Malate that old-timers will find difficult to recognize. A special spotlight falls on streets Nakpil and Orosa, where a new crop of "quality establishments" has sprouted over the past several months. With the new bars come a different crowd—and a different mood. If one hopes to rediscover the bohemian abandon that once characterized Malate, prepare to be disappointed. The current habitués are more polished, more in control of themselves and their environs. In this new Nakpil/Orosa, you'll be as hard-pressed to find a puddle of vomit as you will a Victoria Court flyer.

More than a few bars have closed down. But stalwarts like Insomnia (on its eighth year) and Sala (on its fourth) remain. Veteran Malate guests can remember that before Insomnia and Sala, there were The Library (20-something years and still going strong along Adriatico); Mr Piggy (RIP); the oft-expired, oft-resurrected Penguin; and the seminal Cocobanana that stood on the site now occupied by Empress Garden on the corner of Remedios/Adriatico. Rewind even further, to the "dark ages" of Malate during the Vietnam War years, when, as Manila Mayor Lito Atienza remembers, "They brought decay, sleazy joints. The most seedy and the most questionable characters prevailed. It was even worse than Ermita. We have erased that image. We don't want it to come back."

But it did come back—briefly, in the form of the roving horde that frequented Nakpil/Orosa three to four years ago. Eradicated by NOBRA (the former association of establishments on Nakpil, Orosa, Bocobo, Remedios and Adriatico that controlled the street parties and events, now replaced by ROAM—Restaurant Owners Association of Malate), but with no partner group to watch over the streets where "mindless drinking and debauchery" are most prone to happen, who's to ensure the bad behavior doesn't return?

Markus Schmidt, co-founder of Fidel and Firma, usually so voluble and engaging, hesitates. For the streets of Orosa and Nakpil, he explains, ON Concepts was formed, a group that's come to be known as, "well, how should I say it? It's the Velvet Mafia."

Treated by some of the more romantic types in the Malate scene as a hush-hush piece of info ("Ask carefully, they might get mad," advises one), the Velvet Mafia conjures images of a secret society, meeting clandestinely to determine the fate of the area.

Things couldn't be more to the contrary. Composed of Markus' business partners—Richard Danao, Ricky Toledo, and Chito Vijandre; Raj and soon-to-open Acquario proprietor DJ Montano; and Sala and People's Palace's Colin Mackay, the Velvet Mafia is fast gaining reputation as the new kings—er, queens—of the streets. No one knows for sure who first coined the term, but Chito boldly suggests that it's due to their chutzpah for keeping Nakpil and Orosa alive in their own dogged ways, despite opposition from customers and bar-owners alike. "People kind of regarded us as trendsetters in this area, because we do!" he laughs. "We make things happen here!"

"And also because velvet is (a symbol for being) gay," continues Ricky.

"And because it's soft. Luxe," adds Markus once again.

The "mafia" part is just a catchy appendage, because the six abhor anything violent or ill mannered. It's exactly such hooligan behavior that they fought against with their soft touch—but steel-sharp focus.

The '90s version of the "dark ages" began when, fueled by the ready clientele, new bars invaded the area—ones that sold beer at P50, then P30, then P25, each in a frenetic move to outprice and outsell the next one. Some put up stalls right outside their entrances for customers, many below drinking age, to have easier and swifter access to alcoholic drinks mixed on the spot. Nakpil/Orosa became littered streets and drunken brawls, and establishments with dirty washrooms out for a quick buck.

"That was the Malate 'idea'," describes Chito. "To put up a place and make it look 'bohemian'. Malate cannot be that way anymore. You have to evolve into what society is now after." Ricky explains: "Everybody just wanted to open a bar, like maybe what happened on a strip of Boracay—everybody just wanted in even if they didn't pass the regulations. So many closed."

Concerned about the future of the district, the safety of the streets and the unfair competition posed by the "mobile" bars, "NOBRA urged the mayor to stop the selling of alcohol in the streets," shares Markus. "Once the satellite bars disappeared, the crowds disappeared."

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All in the Game

By Chet M. Espino

In the Swim of Things

Two-time Olympian Eric Buhain takes on the challenging task of restoring dignity to the Filipino athlete as chair of the Philippine Sports Commission. Is he in over his head?

HE'S the most qualified among 61 applicants, and the only one who didn't lobby for the position.

Thus did President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo herself explain her choice of Eric Buhain as chair of the Philippine Sports Commission when the latter paid her a courtesy call after receiving his appointment papers.

News of the appointment of the erstwhile swimming sensation as PSC chair took the entire sporting community by surprise, but the most startled of all was Eric himself. "I was very surprised, flattered," he quips, "and humbled. Decisions will have to be made that must benefit everybody."

But he is not coy about taking on the top spot in Philippine sports. On this, his first day on the job, Eric held a meeting with the PSC staff right after taking his oath of office at Malacañang and gave this writer a two-hour tour of the decrepit living quarters of the country's top athletes inside the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

"I practically grew up here," he says while negotiating a dark alley on the way back to the chairman's office. "*Laman na ako ng* Rizal since my training days and as head coach of swimming. I know this place inside out."

That the PSC, an agency directly under the Office of the President, was organized to push Philippine sports to excellence underscores the value of having an Eric Buhain at its helm. Not only does he come from the ranks, he is one of the finest athletes this country has ever produced, thus earning the respect and admiration of his peers in the sporting community.

A two-time Olympian, Eric was a TOYM awardee for sports in 1991. He was twice voted Athlete of the Year, by the Philippine Sportswriters Association and by the Sports Columnists Organization of the Philippines (SCOOP). Eric was also named Best Male Athlete of the entire Southeast Asian Games in 1991 when he bagged seven gold medals.

But is the jock up to the task? "I follow my heart and my instincts," he says, explaining that his programs will all be "athlete centered." "When it comes to what athletes need, I'm very confident I know how to do this job. But when it comes to the bureaucracy I have to learn and to adjust."

And learn he appears determined to do, with the inch-thick Charter of the PSC never leaving his hand on his first day at work. Already, he knows the pages where the Charter spells out what PSC can and cannot do.

ROMY HOMILLADA

Quest for glory: As a bemedalled swimmer in 1987 (left) and as PSC chair (top)

A full-blooded Green Archer, Eric finished elementary and high school at the De La Salle Santiago Zobel, before going to La Salle University in Pennsylvania, USA, from where he graduated cum laude in Finance. He did all this while training and competing in various local and international events since age 9. The year he graduated from La Salle University was when he won seven gold medals at the 1991 SEA Games.

"I always think big," Eric says when asked what sports has taught him about life and business. Shortly after retiring from competitive swimming and taking over as head coach of the Philippine team, he put up a swimming school called Eric Buhain's World of Swimming that specializes in learn-to-swim programs as well as competitive swimming techniques. Since its establishment in 1995, this program has handled over 10,000 students nationwide and continues to produce some of the country's finest competitive swimmers. "When I thought of starting the program, I knew I wanted it big and not just a swimming school. I wanted it nationwide."

Eric also brings with him the attitude—the competitive spirit, the determination and the stubbornness—of an athlete. He is ecstatic about getting much more than he bargained for when he dreamed of giving the athletes a voice in the PSC since taking the athletes' cause to the streets in the early '90s. The brush with politics in sports happened in 1993, when he was cut off from the national team that would compete in the Southeast Asian Games despite winning a gold medal in the pre-qualifying competition and setting a meet record at that. He threatened to go public if he was not included in the team—and made good his threat. Media needed no prodding on learning that Eric Buhain, already a household name at the time, had a mouthful to say about politics and sports. While his press conference was airing live on AM radio, an emissary came running with a list of national team members that included him.

This episode got the attention of other national athletes, who approached him with all sorts of horror stories of their sorry plight, ranging from poor training facilities and living conditions to tales of graft and corruption and yes, physical abuse and sexual molestation. Having found a leader who was not only articulate but also possessed with a fighting heart and the credibility of an outstanding athlete, they organized the Alliance of Unified Athletes of the Philippines and made Eric their president. The athletes gathered documentary evidence and held daily rallies before Malacañang, prompting then President Ramos to form a three-member investigating panel to look into their complaints. A senate investigation was also conducted, and the rest is history.

After the athletes succeeded in having the PSC chair and three other commissioners fired, Eric quietly disappeared from the public eye and focused on his job as head coach of the Philippine swimming team.

In the years that followed, Eric harbored the thought of representing his fellow athletes in the PSC board, but never, he stresses, did he ever dream of being PSC chair. The thought now excites him.

A go-getter, he believes in getting things done quickly. "Life is short, so we need to do things today. Tomorrow I may not be chairman anymore so I must do my best today."

His to-do list includes sprucing up the athletes' living quarters. The best men and women of Philippine sports are sleeping in cramped rooms with leaking roofs and walls, among termites and rats. Their living conditions have been at the heart of Eric's cause since his activist days. He wants to give them a separate, modern dormitory type building that is worthy of their stature as national athletes. But there's no budget yet for such a major undertaking so he will have to push for a temporary remedy.

"We can't wait," he explains. "The athletes are in training. They trained today, they will train again tomorrow and we must give them what they need – today." He adds: "My vision is for Filipinos to be proud of our athletes. The only way to do that is to produce champions, so let's give them what they need."

The way he describes his single-mindedness about showering Filipino athletes with everything they need, one is tempted to think they're bound for a life of comfort and style. Athletes better think again.

Over dinner he tells his audience about how he once ribbed a cyclist for having a big belly, indicating that he'll be breathing down athletes' necks for them to work hard to deserve all the support that would be coming their way.

And then there's the matter of the budget. As of this interview, Eric has only seen a summary of the P430 million PSC budget prepared for his briefing. "I want details," he says. "I'll be asking for the complete financial statements."

A perennial cost center for the government, the PSC has over 400 employees deployed nationwide. Most of them are assigned to headquarters at the Rizal Complex, and the sports facilities the PSC maintains in Pasig and Baguio City. The agency's overhead expenses all but use up the monthly budget so it depends on extra funding for its projects, which may or may not come in these hard times.

It doesn't take long for Eric's financial savvy to show, and "details" to surface. Two days after the interview, he tells a gathering of sportswriters that the budget for security and janitorial services is a whopping P4 million monthly.

The scene is actually all too familiar. Eric Buhain is in the water, and the nation watches.

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The Cover Image Markus Schmidt, Chito Vijandre, Ricky Toledo and Richard Danao lead Malate's 'Velvet Mafia' *Photograph by Jim Guiao Punzalan*

Poetry

Windsock

Orange banner:
It catches a struggling
Wind and tames it
For a few seconds
Then letting it loose
To go where it may.

Joyous in this contact,
The windsock is always full,
Always fulfills its mandate
And sole purpose.

Be wind
To my windsock.

Alma S. Anonas

Sa Gilid ng Ilong

Sa pagpasok niya sa silid,
May naamoy siyang sumisiwang
Sa maiksing hanging nakapalibot
Sa kanyang kinatatayuan at pagkatao.
Sabi niya, ang panghi ng ihi
Ko na nakalatag sa inidoro ng banyo.
Nakasara naman ang pinagbibintangang pinto
Na siyang nagtatago ng misteryo.
Ni kahit anong puwersa, hindi makapasok
Sa loob ng pintong ito, maliban
sa pang-amoy ng ilong.
Sabi ko, tinatawag lang siya ng sarili
Niyang anino—
Sinusundan siya kahit saan siya magtungo.
At nalalanghap lang pala
Ang di pinaliguang mukha.

Arvin T. Ello

Music
By Eric S. Caruncho

Flying Solo

Beyond 'Rent' and Ugoy-Ugoy, Lynn Sherman surprises with her personal new album

WILL the real Lynn Sherman please stand up? Those who know her as the lead singer of jazz group Ugoy-Ugoy, as well as those johnnies-come-lately who know her primarily from her role as Monique Wilson's lesbian lover in the local production of "Rent," may be mildly puzzled by "Lynn Sherman and Friends," her recently-released solo album on N/A Records.

If the album's purpose was to demonstrate Sherman's versatility and range as a vocalist, then it's a whopping success. But for those who like their music safe and predictable, it's a dizzying ride.

"Lynn Sherman and Friends" starts off with some classic OPM balladry ("*Pagtatapat*"), progresses to sophisticated synthesizer pop ("*Wag Mag-alala*"), lite jazz ("Twin"), some funky R and B ("Sleepless") and the blues ("Feeling Guilty"). For good measure, it throws in a thumping house remix (the "Insomniac Dream Remix" of "Sleepless").

"It's like a scrapbook of all the kinds of music that I listen to," she explains.

So which is the real Lynn Sherman? That's a trick question: It's all her.

"I guess people have to have labels, but I don't really consider myself a jazz singer," says Sherman. "I sing all sorts of things. People don't know it but I listen to a lot of pop."

Ugoy-Ugoy fans who might have been under the impression that Lynn's been on a steady diet of Ella Fitzgerald would probably choke on their beer nuts to learn that in her Walkman these days is—Howard Jones?

"Ever since October, all I've been listening to is Sting's new album, and a lot of '80s pop. The Thompson Twins. Do you remember that group Scritti Politti?"

(Well, Miles Davis did cover a Scritti Politti song on his "Tutu" album. Hey, he even covered Cyndi Lauper.)

The point is, Sherman refuses to be painted into a stylistic corner, even one as prestigious (if commercially the "kiss of death") as "jazz singer."

In completing her album, for instance, Sherman chose to take the independent route: she took advice from Cynthia Alexander, and worked with the production team of Grace Nono and Bob Aves.

Which makes "Lynn Sherman and Friends" something of an anomaly: a "pop" album produced through "alternative" means.

"I'm neither here nor there," she says. Well, I wouldn't exactly put it that way. Sherman's performance in the musical "Rent" won her new fans and a much higher profile than the one she'd been enjoying with Ugoy-Ugoy, then as now one of the local music scene's best-kept secrets.

Aha, people thought, a singer who can act. But Sherman just came from a grueling nine-show tour of Hong Kong with the cast of "The Vagina Monologues," in which she did no singing at all. And she will be touring with the all-of-a-sudden controversial new production of the "Monologues."

For a singer who's always performed with top-notch musicians such as the members of Ugoy-Ugoy, it's like doing a high wire act without a net.

"It's a totally different world if you're a singer," says Sherman. "You can't hide behind your songs. It's very different from doing 'Rent.' The tension factor with 'Rent' wasn't as high. Here you're onstage for an hour and a half, taking on at least three different characters. No bathroom breaks, just the microphone. It's hard when you don't have anyone to bounce off. You sweat buckets before the show. I still have nightmares about forgetting my lines."

Sherman started singing with the UP Cherubim and Seraphim when she was still in grade school. As a Humanities major at the University of the Philippines, she started jamming with the UP Jazz Ensemble, from whose ranks would come the members of the Ugoy-Ugoy band. The bond with the band solidified even more when she started a relationship with Bond Samson, the band's pianist and arranger, and now her partner and chief musical collaborator.

"All of a sudden, I found myself actually making a living out of music," she recalls. "But even in high school, I didn't think I could stand a 9 to 5 job."

Although she was a full-time musician, theater was never far behind. Sherman caught the bug when she saw Mitch Valdes in "Katy!" at the Rizal Theater.

"Gosh, I thought, I'd love to do something like that," she recalls.

She got her chance when she was cast in "Rent." As an added bonus, Ugoy-Ugoy provided the musical backing.

"Recent events have made me realize how blessed I am just being able to perform all the different things that I get to do," says Sherman. "It sounds corny, but when you realize how short life is, you can't really be bothered with details of correct career paths. You just get the work you can, do the best you can, and move on to other things." Q

EDDIE BOY ESCUDERO

Poetry

Singles Club

For Ana Linda, Nelda & Ann

Every month we pick a date
And time to spend our cash on lunch
That can buy back all the calories
We burn checking college compositions.

Our conversations stray from subjects
That do not necessarily agree with our verbs,
To dangling earrings and modifiers,
Or whatever dangles in thought.

Words pirouette on the tip of our tongues,
Crush the buttered leaf of a cabbage,
Or slide on a sliver of stir-fried carrot
To the tune of crisp pork skin cracking like a joke.

We choke on chicken skin clinging
To our depressions, but we can easily grab
A Coke to wash down the heaviness
Of a thin paycheck.

We love the work; we are slaves of the book,
And now of the cook. So this is how we share
The brew and the broth: In air-conditioned restaurants
With salad-green curtains and salmon table cloths.

When the bill comes, we divide equally.
We keep the loose change because we love
To hear the jangle of coins in our classrooms
As we muse about the value of verbal economy.

Alex C. Delos Santos

The Sunday Inquirer Magazine accepts contributions for our regular poetry section. Interested contributors should send a printed copy of the poem (which may be in English or Filipino) together with a self-addressed stamped envelope to Ruel S. De Vera, poetry editor, Sunday Inquirer Magazine, Chino Roces (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Mascardo and Yague Streets, Makati City 1263, or e-mail to <sim@inquirer.com.ph>

LOSE WEIGHT: Konjac, the formula that has helped countless European women

For all those (women and men) who wish to lose 8 lbs (or more) in one week

What is Konjac, the famous cure, which makes you feel attractive again even in the most hopeless case?

"It's fantastic to be able to look at myself in the mirror and see how slender I am."

...This is what Dr. Hortz (Senior German Specialist in natural medicine) reveals:

"Those who say that they can let you lose weight with the help of some methods or medicine are liars.'

Please excuse me for being so outspoken. But I am shocked. I am shocked because during the past three years I have met more than two hundred persons with weight problem. And almost every time they said: "I don't know anymore what to do. I have tried everything, but nothing could make me lose my excessive pounds."

Do you know what most of these people answered when asked about they had tried? They responded: "Diet or medicines, or again various methods, pills..."

And do you know what these people have become today, the desperate ones who have been incapable of losing their overweight? All of them lost weight. Even the one case who had to reduce more than 50 lbs. was able to make it. And without any diet. Thanks to "Konjac Formula", the 100% natural cure.

Almost immediate results

"Konjac Formula" is a Japanese plant-based compound whose active substances aim at forcing your body to eliminate instead of accumulating body fat. This cure is so incredibly effective that you can lose up to 800 grams as early as after only 24 hours. Each week, you can lose at least-depending on the type of your case-4 kgs. (or 9 lbs.)

These active substances work in your body in the morning, in the afternoon and even at night while you sleep. You lose your weight automatically. The only thing you have to do is to use the formula before the two major daily meals.

You can go on eating as usual. There is no diet. No need to count the calories because every superfluous intake of calories will be automatically eliminated. Therefore, you will never feel hungry. Neither will you have the impression of depriving yourself of anything.

The water accumulation and the fat storage become progressively dissolved in every part of the body, including your hips, waist, thighs and other spots well-known for being uneasy to get thinner.

Even if you tried everything...

If you never really lost weight, this time you will. Even though you may think that you are a particular case, you still will. You will have difficulty in believing your eyes when you see that, day after day, week after week, the pointer tips the scales at lesser pounds.

Moreover, it does not matter if you have had overweight for 5 or 20 years. Neither is it important if you have to lose 10, 20, 50 lbs. or even more.

Now let's forget about secrets as well as miracle products and lose weight with guarantee...

Everybody who experienced this fast weight reducing cure has lost weight without putting on any pounds. Don't you think that if the cure worked with others (including the hopeless cases), it will also make you lose weight and remain permanently slender?

I repeat that, with this unique cure, you will be losing at least 8 lbs. each week, if you need to lose less than 22 lbs. And 10-12 lbs. weekly if you wish to lose more than 22 lbs., simply by ordering a test treatment as early as today.

IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO READ ANYTHING ELSE, READ AT LEAST THE FOLLOWING

The five principal advantages of the Konjac Formula:
1) 100% herbal-based
2) Rich in fiber with great water-absorbing capacity.
3) Satiating effect.
4) Limits uptake of lipids and carbohydrates and facilitates intestinal transit.
5) No therapeutic claims.

Let's imagine that your intake is 4,500 calories daily.

With Konjac Formula or "the fat burner", your body will consume merely 1,500 calories: you lose your weight automatically, without any change in your eating habits.

In order to provide you with the proof of the absolute efficiency of this weight reducing cure, you can test it without obligation. You will either lose your excessive pounds in a very rapid and easy way, or pay nothing.

What would be a better proof of the unconditional success of Dr. Hortz' cure than to tell you: "Receive the product, lose initially at least 8 lbs. without any special diet, and make your decision only after."

IMPORTANT: At present, our stock is still very limited. In order to be assured of the prompt service, please fill out and send us the test coupon this very day. Do it now while you are thinking about it.

M.S.I.C., Room 303 Munro Bldg., 612 Pinatubo St., Mandaluyong City, 1550 M.M.

COUPON FOR GUARANTEED FREE TRIAL
Please cut out and forward to
M.S.I.C., Room 303 Munro Bldg., 612 Pinatubo St., Mandaluyong City, 1550 M.M.

YES, I would like to benefit from your unique offer to test, without obligation, the Konjac formula or "the fat burner". You expressly guarantee that
1) This 100% natural product is without any therapeutic effect
2) I do not have to follow any particular diet
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4) My absolutely free trial is guaranteed.

If I am not satisfied after taking a week treatment of my first bottle, I shall return to you whatever is left on my first bottle and the remaining unopened bottles within 30 days by registered mail. In this case, you will refund me the full value of the product upon reception of my returned package.
The above being understood, please send me within 15 days, discreetly packed, without any outside marking, the formula hereunder which I choose:

615 ☐ I must lose more than 20 pounds (.....lbs to be exact). I order a double cure at P 2,295 + P 55 forwarding charges = P 2,350
614 ☐ I need to lose less than 20 pounds (.....lbs to be exact). I order a single cure at P 1,295 + P 55 forwarding charges = P 1,350
616 ☐ I want to lose my 40 pounds or more (.....lbs to be exact). I order an extended cure at P 2,895 + P 55 forwarding charges = P 2,950
617 ☐ I want to lose my excess pounds for good and order an intensive cure at P 3,395 + P 55 forwarding charges = P 3,450
300 ☐ Aside from my treatment, I would like to order a Konjak Gel Cream to help more burn excess fats and reshape my figure at a price of P 995.00

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Cardholder: _____ Signature: _____

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P.S. If you mail this coupon within 3 days, you will receive in addition an unusual (and pleasing) gift, free of charge. The "surprise" regalo will be inside the package, and you may keep it, no matter what.

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Avon to help PGH Cancer Institute Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer

Breast cancer is no joke. And it is particularly tragic when the one afflicted is financially challenged and would rather use her few pesos to buy food for her children. Medicines and treatments are already a luxury beyond her means.

This is the state of most Filipino women today who are diagnosed with breast cancer. Coupled with the distressing discovery is the sometimes even more disturbing realization of how much the treatment will further deplete a budget that is barely enough for daily needs.

The natural recourse of indigent women would be government-owned medical institutions like the Philippine General Hospital Cancer Institute, where consultations are free and treatments and medicines are more affordable. But there is also a challenge here.

Dr. Maria Lourdes de Leon Matsuda, PGH supervising consultant for the Breast Clinic, explained: "The incidence of the disease among poor women is rising. The PGH is in urgent need of facilities to address the problem. The present clinic being used for breast cancer patients is too small to accommodate the number of women who come to us for medical attention. We want to accommodate as many women as we can, so we need to have out own breast care clinic."

The breast care unit of the PGH does not have its own clinic and can only accommodate patients one day a week. On Thursdays, it is very common to see a long, long line of women waiting for their turn to see the doctors. Now, aside from praying that their disease goes away, patients also need to pray that they can avail of consultation before clinic hours are over. These prospects are not very encouraging to most women, especially those who are inclined to translate the hours of waiting into hours that they could work and earn their meals for the day.

Dr. Cecilia Llave, president of the PGH Cancer Institute, remarked, "We really see the need for urgent help from anyone willing to extend a helping hand."

Global beauty company Avon responds to this cause with their newest corporate initiative "Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer" (KGBC), part of Avon's ongoing global program to raise funds for the fight against breast cancer.

The KGBC initiative in the Philippines aims to raise P5 million through the sale of one million lipsticks. The special edition lipsticks will be offered at half the regular price. Avon commits to donate P5 for every lipstick sold. The funds raised will be utilized for the construction of a proposed breast care facility and the purchase of a mammography machine.

Malu Dy Buncio, Avon Cosmetics Inc. general manager, explained, "With Avon's Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer, we make more women aware of the dangers that breast cancer poses. Early detection offers women the best chance of survival. It is our hope that by April, we will be able to present the funds raised to the PGH Cancer Institute so that more women will be saved."

GMA commends Avon's 'Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer' Campaign

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has commended Avon, the Philippine

Cancer Society and the Philippine General Hospital Cancer Institute for working together in promoting the health and welfare of the marginalized women in the country, through Avon's "Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer" (KGBC) campaign.

"Your efforts in raising funds for the purchase of a mammography machineand the establishment of a Breast Care Center at the Philippine General Hospital are laudable. I hope this noble endeavor will reap much public support and further advance our aim for a better quality of life for our people," the President said in her key message for the launch of the campaign.

Globally, Avon has raised more than $100 million in the fight against the disease and is considered as the largest corporate supporter of the breast cancer cause. In September of last year, the cosmetics company launched the KGBC in the United States. Because the Philippines has the highest incidence of breast cancer in Asia Pacific, Avon brought the campaign to the Philippines and launched it last February.

The President also said that she was pleased to learn that Avon understood the potentials of women in helping women. "This determination to promote the health of our people is a good example of the unity and leadership we need in this crucial time of social and economic transformation. I encourage you to persevere in your resolve to give the Filipino people the opportunity to lead healthy, more fulfilling and productive lives," she added.

President Arroyo leads the many other prominent women from various sectors of society who strongly support the campaign.

Megastar Sharon Cuneta joins the campaign to 'Kiss Breast Cancer Goodbye'

Breast cancer is a disease Megastar Sharon Cuneta has gotten up close and personal with. She recalls the trauma of being an 11-year-old whose mother had to undergo a mastectomy. "The tumor was declared malignant," she shares. "My mom was given only several months to live." The possibility that she would lose her mother made an impact on her. She remembers how her grandfather would get down on his knees to pray every evening for her mother's recovery. "It's really a miracle that she was healed," Sharon declares.

Her mother's brush with death has made Sharon more determined to battle the disease and help search for a cure. "It's a big problem for women, but it's something that we can fight." Her message to all women is that "the sooner you find out, the more chances you have of conquering it." She herself has a mammogram every six months as a precautionary measure.

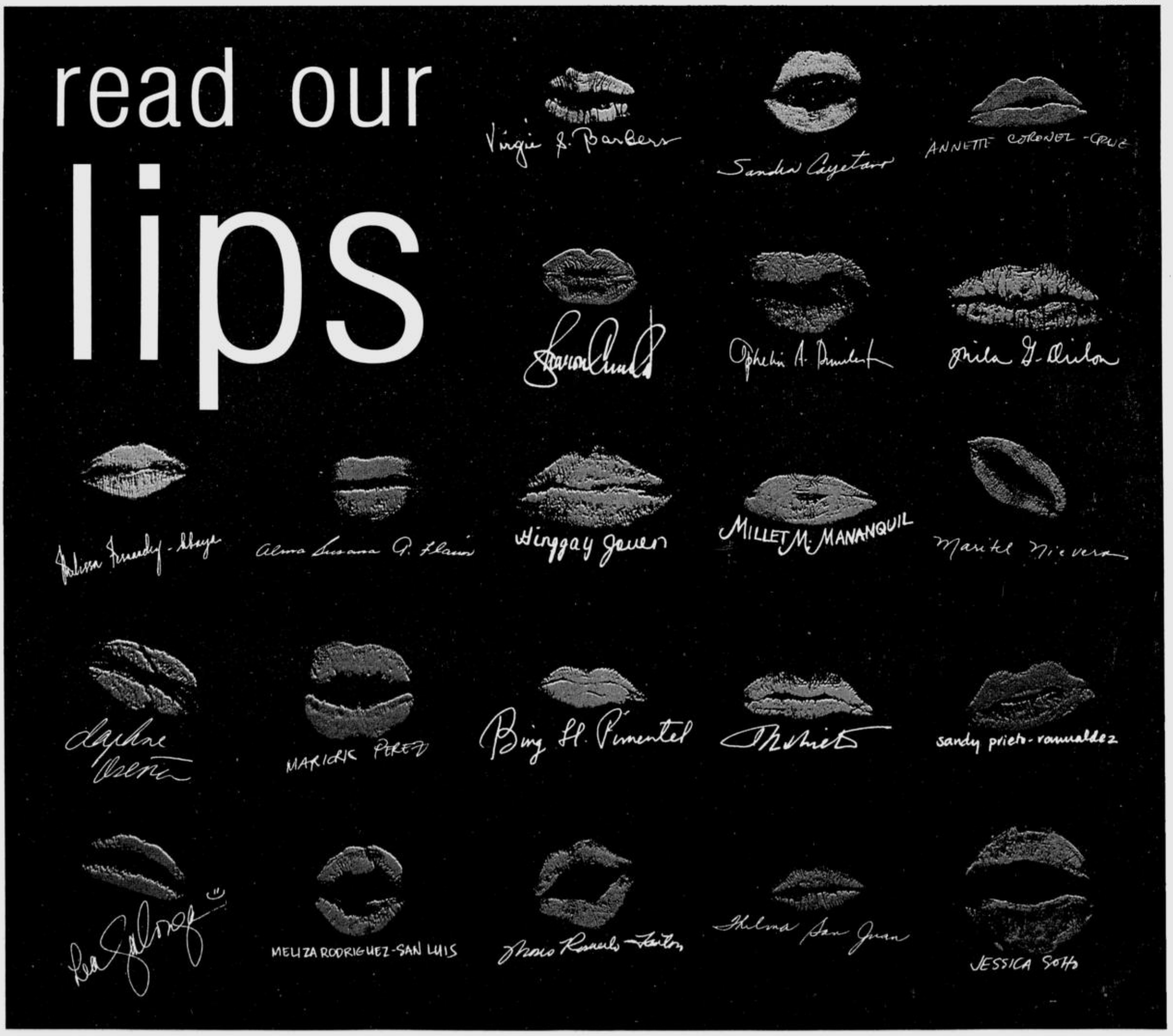
To show her support of the breast cancer cause, Sharon recently sealed a kiss of commitment to Avon's "Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer" campaign, which aims to make preventive measures such as mammograms and consultations accessible to more women.

Funds raised through the sale of a special Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer lipstick will be used to purchase a mammography machine for the PGH and to establish a permanent breast cancer center in the hospital. The lipsticks have been given special names: Courage, Faith, Life, Heart and Strength.

"There should be more of this," Sharon says fervently about Avon's campaign. Along with other women of courage, faith, life, heart and strength such as Zsa Zsa Padilla, Celeste Legaspi, Rachel Alejandro, Lea Salonga, Tweetie de Leon, Apples Aberin, Abbygale Arenas, Bianca Araneta, Anna Shier, Mikee, MaiMai and China Cojuangco, Janice and Gelli de Belen, Sharon hopes that soon, more Filipino women can kiss breast cancer goodbye.

To order the limited edition "Kiss Goodbye to Breast Cancer" lipsticks, call Edna Bello or Zeny Avila of the Philippine Cancer Society at 734-2126 or the Avon Customer hotline at 864-2900.

ADVERTORIAL



Survivors' Tales
By Pennie Azarcon-dela Cruz

A New Day for Sarah

Seven years after her Middle East ordeal, Sarah Balabagan is making the best of a new life of music and kindness

NO, she'd rather not talk about that ignominious day. It's all in the movie, starring Vina Morales, she says. "*Ganong-ganon ang nangyari* (That's exactly what happened)," says Sarah Balabagan, her voice and eyes suddenly building walls around her. "It's all in the past. No point talking about it," she adds in Pilipino.

For those who missed the movie, here's how a newspapers recounts the incident that changed Sarah's life:

"An Islamic court on Monday sentenced 16-year-old Filipino maid Sarah Balabagan to seven years in prison for stabbing to death her Arab employer who raped her. Both the families of Balabagan and her 58-year-old employer Mohammad Abdallah al-Baloushi were unhappy with the court verdict that she was guilty of manslaughter...Balabagan was accused of killing her employer by stabbing him 34 times. She pleaded not guilty, maintaining throughout the eight-month trial that she acted in self-defense after Baloushi raped her on July 19, 1994."

Sarah was 14 when she decided to find work abroad. The eldest girl in a brood of seven, she felt compelled to help out her father, Karim, who couldn't find a steady job and her mother, Bai, who would hawk food in the streets of Sultan Kudarat, Cotabato City where the family hails from. Her elder brothers didn't finish school so they couldn't find work either. "I was being shuttled among relatives who could help support my studies and in return, I would help out in their house," Sarah recalls. "So I thought, why not become a full time domestic and earn some money instead?".

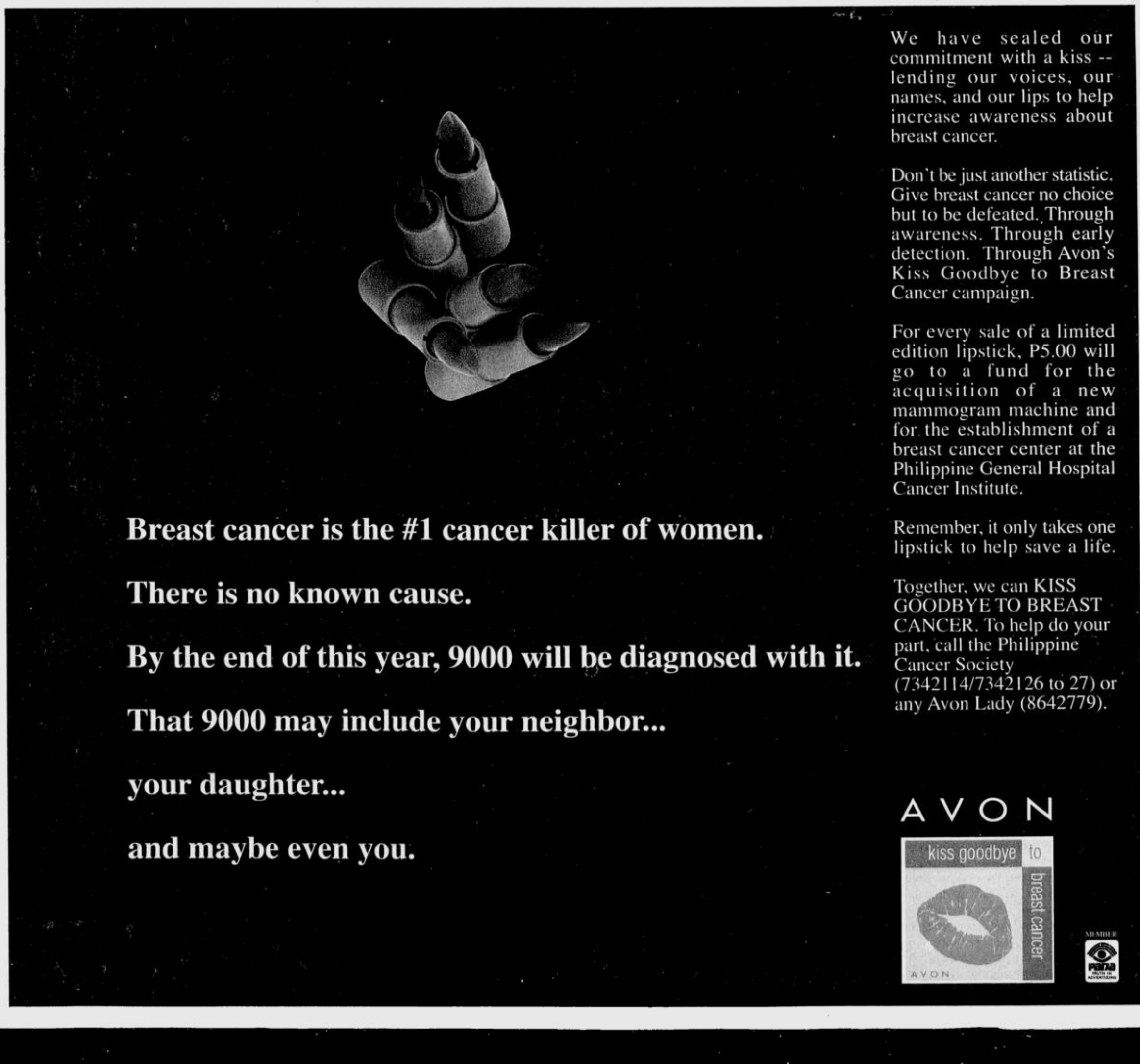
Her parents objected, but Sarah was adamant. "Other girls my age were going abroad so why not me? Besides, I would be working with another Muslim family so I wasn't afraid at all." Being on the plump side at that time, Sarah easily passed for 28, the age listed in her passport by her recruiter. "There was also an airport insider who facilitated things," she adds. Her employer, who was retired and had four grown-up sons, also knew she was still a child.

That did not stop him from offering her $135 for sex, according to Sarah's mother. When Sarah refused, he tried to rape her. "I told his sons about it, so I guess that's why they did not insist on having me executed and eventually forgave me when it happened," Sarah adds.

Of course it helped that her case had gained world attention, thanks to the Save Sarah Movement started in France that raised funds and protested her sentence. It also helped that the King of the United Arab Emirates interceded on her behalf.

To page 6

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO



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...from page 5

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She couldn't make light of homesickness, however. Although prisoners were allowed visitors and letters and Sarah's parents managed to visit her thrice in two years, she missed her family a lot, says this Cotabato native. "That was the hardest part of being in jail," she adds.

But prison life also brought her pleasant and unexpected discoveries. "It was in jail where I became open-minded about religion. I realized that Muslims and Christians can live together. Religion is not what matters, but respect for each other's beliefs. *Masaya kami*. We prayed on our own, we never discussed the Bible and the Quran."

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Virginia Garcia's **Memories** of Jolo

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The city of Jolo had a rare period of peace and prosperity in the 1920s and 1930s between the end of the "Moro Wars" in 1913 and the onslaught of World War II in 1941. These relatively peaceful years covered the fascinating childhood of Virginia Garcia who was born in Jolo in the '20s. Last month I had the pleasure of chatting with Virginia for a couple of hours.

Her father had been one of the first graduates of the University of the Philippines medical school in Manila. As a young doctor, he was first assigned to the Philippine Constabulary in Dadiangas in southern Mindanao, now General Santos City. He liked the rural life and moved on to an assignment even further south, to the island of Jolo. He was attracted to the challenge of serving in an isolated community and treating infections and wounds as best he could in the days before antibiotics. In 1920, he married a young woman fresh from convent school in Intramuros, and they remained in Jolo for over 35 years.

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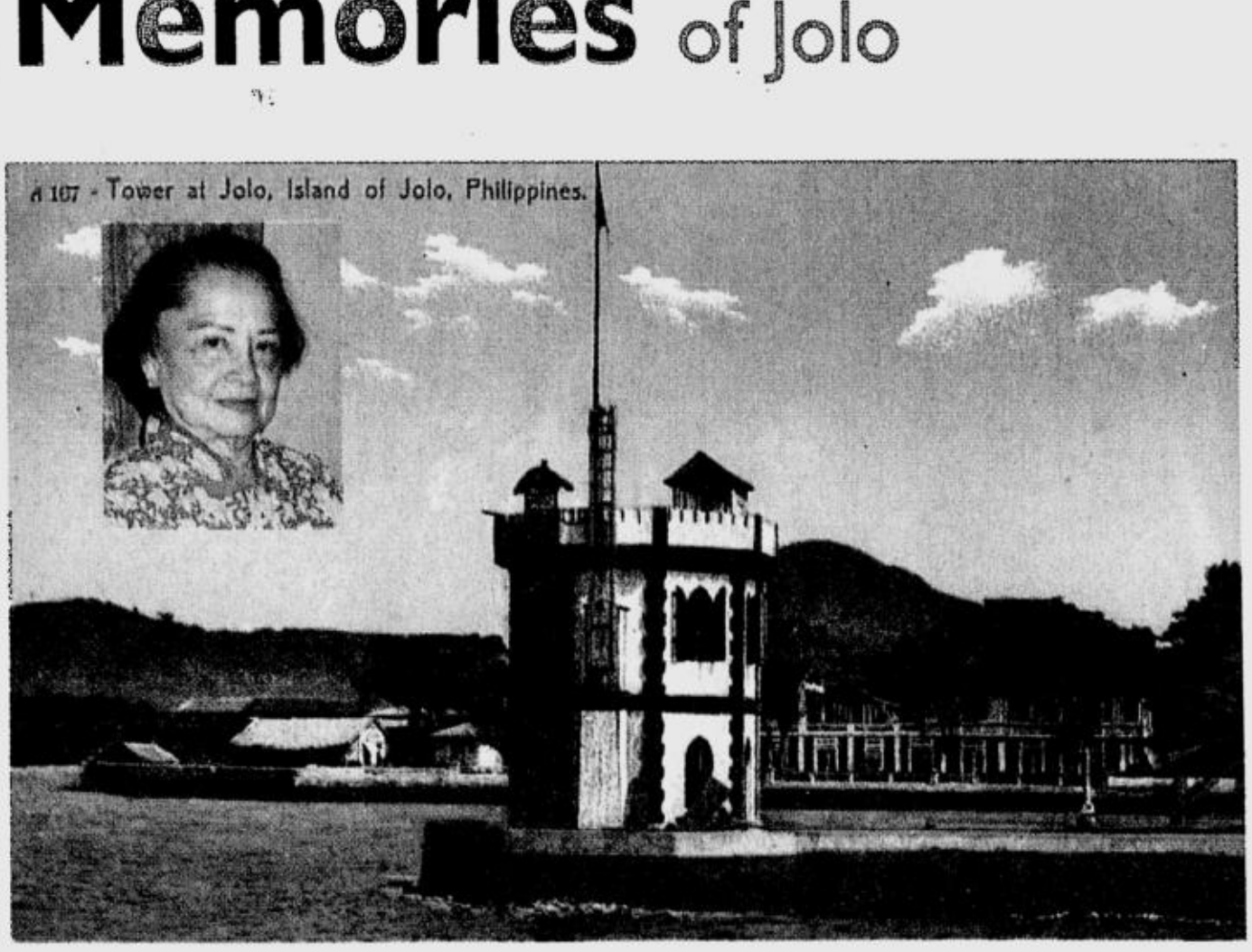

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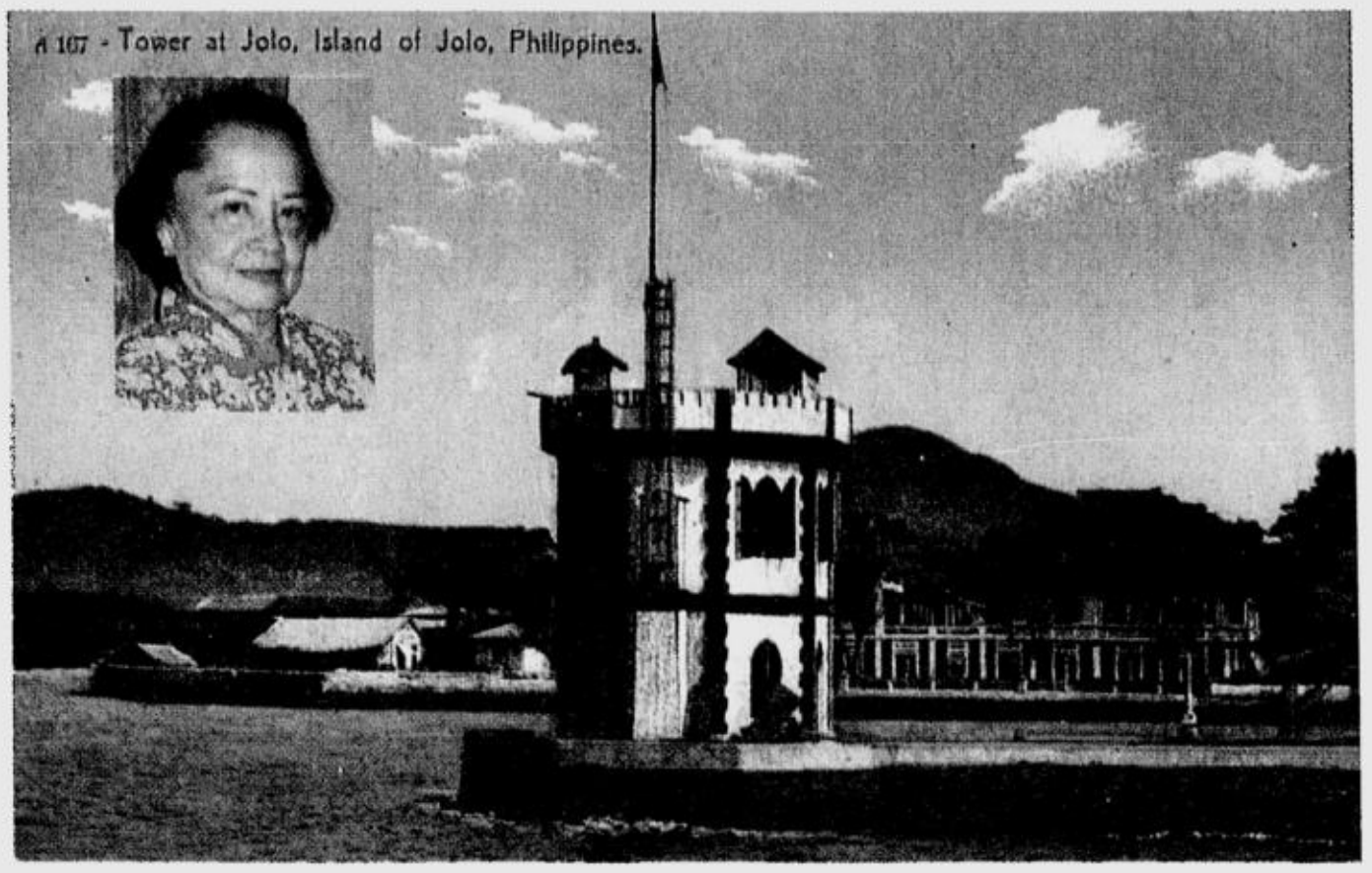

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Art

Dissonance and Rhetorics, a solo exhibit by Bernardo Pacquing until today at Finale Art Gallery, 4/L SM Megamall A.

Pasnim, an exhibit of 32 ready-made marble mortars remodeled into pots for plants by Liwa Araos at the Crucible Gallery, 4/L SM Megamall until March 17.

"Images from Ground Zero" at the Met

Art in Blue Denim: *Alay sa Bata,* a special charity project for Bantay Bata 163 featuring artworks in denims by some of the country's well-respected artists until March 13 at Gallery 101, 'Kaimo Building, Quezon Avenue. A P10,000 donation entitles one to a raffle ticket. The raffle of artworks will be held on March 16, 4 p.m. at Rockwell Powerplant. For details, call 410-0159.

Silent Talking, an abstract exhibit by Australian artist Tony Twigg and Filipino artists Gus Albor and Roberto Robles at the Australia Centre, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City until March 15.

Titled Untitled features the diverse works of the Painting majors of St. Scholastica's College, Manila at Alliance Francaise de Manille, 209 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel Air II, Makati City until March 15.

Images from Ground Zero, a photo exhibit that captures the horrors and heroism of the Sept. 11 attack on the World Trade Center, until March 15 at the Metropolitan Museum, Central Bank Complex, Roxas Boulevard, Manila.

Ladawan, an exhibit of handpainted black and white photographs of Ilocandia by Luis Dee at the Kaisa-Angelo King Heritage Center, Anda and Cabildo Streets, Intramuros, Manila until March 17. Dee will also run a workshop on coloring black and white photographs in April. For details, call 527-6083.

Onstage

The Harlequin Theater Guild of De La Salle University-Manila is staging the Christian musical **Godspell,** based on the gospel of Matthew, March 10, 6:30 p.m. at St. Cecilia's Hall, St. Scholastica's College, Manila. For tickets, call 0917-5141911.

Intramuros Evenings Performing Arts Series features **Libby Manaoag Files: Ang Paghahanap sa Puwertas Prinsesas,** a PETA production on women's reproductive rights, March 15, 6:30 p.m., Puerta Real Gardens. Free admission. For inquiries, call 5273138 or 5272961.

Cinema

The Japan Foundation Manila Office presents **Nihon Eiga Sai 2002: The Lighter Side of Japan,** a Japanese contemporary film festival ongoing until March 24. Regular screenings will be held at Cinema 2, Shangri-La Plaza (March 10-12), Rizal Park Open Air Auditorium (March 15-17), and at the Antonio Molina Hall, EPCIB Tower II, H.V. dela Costa St., Makati (March 18-21). In celebration of the Pundaquit Festival, screenings will also be held at Casa San Miguel, Zambales (March 22-24). All screenings are open to the public. For inquiries and schedules, call 811-6155 to 58.

A scene from "Rainbow Kids," onscreen at the Japan Foundation's film festival at Shangri-La Plaza

Food

Makati Shangri-La's **Gourmet Corner** has expanded its traditional offerings of patisserie and delicatessen items to include lavish arrangements of hydrangeas, roses, lilliums bromeliads, mums, anthuriums and other flowers that guests can buy for any occasion. For inquiries, call 840-0884.

Holiday Inn Manila brings back the gastronomic delights and cultural treasures of Cagayan Valley with **Pagayaya II Food Festival** from March 11-23 at the Café Coquilla. For reservations, call 526-1212 ext. 2318.

T.G.I. Friday's introduces **Friday's Fiesta,** a feast of old-time Filipino favorites comprised of four new dishes like Friday's Grilled Pampano, Friday's *Gambas, Inihaw na Liempo* and Chicken

Cagayan's feast from "Pagayaya II" at the Holiday Inn

Barbecue and Friday's Fiesta Platter for groups of four to six. Available at T.G.I. Friday's branches at Glorietta, Ortigas, Malate, Quezon City, Alabang and Sta. Lucia East.

Hotel Inter-Continental Manila presents lunch and dinner buffets of **authentic Sri Lankan dishes** until March 15 at the Café Jeepney. Ceylon tea and recipe books featuring Sri Lankan dishes will also be on sale at the Jeepney Deli Shop. For inquiries, call 819-0645.

Atbp

ProActive Center for Training holds its **Managing a Restaurant/Canteen Seminar-Workshop** on March 11-20, 1-5 p.m. at Bedas Restaurant, C-5, Libis, QC. For reservations, call 823-4947 or 0919-5500601.

Pet and plant lovers are invited to see the first **Greenhills Garden and Pet Show** to be held at Centermall, Greenhills Shopping Complex from March 15 to April 17. To be showcased are birds, orchids, ornamentals, plant and animal products, fertilizers, ornamentals, veterinary products, aquarium products and assorted products sold at wholesale prices. For inquiries, call 820-3862 and 826-8162.

Learn the art of **Decoupage** on March 16 at the Earthlite, 4/F COD Dept. Store Building, Cubao. For details, call 941-1136.

The UP Society of Student Archivists and the UP Office for Initiatives in Culture and the Arts, in cooperation with the UP College of Arts and Letters, UP Library and Information Science Students Association and the Society of Filipino Archivists, present a forum **Putting Our Acts Together: Cooperation Among Archives, Libraries and Museums** at the Bulwagang Claro M. Recto, UP Faculty Center, from 1 to 4 p.m. on March 18. The forum aims to explore the possibility of networking and establishing linkages among collecting institutions. For details, email archivists@updiliman.com or call 0917-9865177.

The Cottage Industry Technology Center is holding a series of **free hands-on training courses** on novelty items, basic and decorative candle making, handmade papermaking, food processing, flower arrangement, furniture making and metalworking from March 11 to 22 at the CITC Compound, 20 Russet St., SSS Village, Marikina City. For details, please call 948-2875 or 942-3974.

The **Positivism summer art workshop** to be conducted by E.R. Tagle is now accepting participants who wish to learn the basic of drawings and paintings. The schedule for Makati residents will be every Saturday starting April 6 at the Roozen Hall, St. John Bosco Parish, and at the E.R. Tagle gallery at 1144 Chino Roces Ave. starting March 16. For inquiries, call 816-0904.

By Jess Abrera

For this week's bands and schedules call:

- Hard Rock Café (893-4662-65)
- Virgin Café : QC (926-7982)
- '70s Bistro: 46 Anonas St., QC (922-0492)
- Hobbit House: 1801 Mabini St., Malate, Manila (521-7604)
- Strumm's: El Pueblo, Ortigas (637-3009)

X-manila

Cuaresma II: Lenten Images of Faith, exhibit of various religious relics and artifacts from the private collections of Angelenos at the Museo ning Angeles until March 27. For details, call (045) 888-4703 and (045) 322-8392.

A **free seminar-workshop on the Art of Positive Thinking** will be held on March 16, 3-5 p.m. at Brahma Kumaris Meditation Center, #55 First Road, Quezon Hill, Baguio City. For details, call (074) 445-5935.

Cavite High Centenary: The 100 Days Countdown kicks off with a motorcade on March 12 at 3 p.m. starting at Montano Stadium, capsule-laying ceremony (CNHS Quadrangle) at 5 p.m. and the coronation night of the Mr. & Ms. Cavite High Centenary, 7 p.m. at the Montano Hall. For details, call (046) 431-6648 to 49.

The **Iloilo National High School** celebrates its centennial on March 15 and 16 at the INHS campus in Lapaz district, Iloilo City. Class 1952 will have its grand reenactment at the FJ monument on March 15 while the grand homecoming will be on March 16. A souvenir book of outstanding alumni will also be launched. For details, call (033) 3200846 or email jopolonan@hotmail.com.

The Sunday Inquirer Magazine welcomes listings of events in and outside Metro Manila. Please send announcements at least two weeks in advance, and include contact numbers for inquiries on schedules

LIVING IN THE HIGHEST

Wrong Thinking, Wrong Living

It shows in nations and peoples around the world

by Pete F. Galvez

The Evil Empire. That's what former U.S. President Ronald Reagan dubbed the atheist USSR, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the late communist superpower. The Soviet Union shared the same borders with European nations: Romania, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Finland. In Asia, Communist Russia's immediate neighbor was China. All succumbed to the spread of communism. Except one—Finland. What's right with Finland?

One by one other nations turned red. In Europe, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. In Asia, North Korea, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. In the Caribbean, Cuba. While in South America many countries experienced bloody encounters with communist rebels in Panama, Peru, Chile, Nicaragua, Honduras, Venezuela, Brazil, El Salvador, and Colombia. Let's not forget Liberation Theology (the Good News interpreted according to Marxist principles) spread like wild fire in most regions [let alone dictatorship regimes] in South America.

Perhaps the following extract from *World History and Cultures in Christian Perspective* (page 335), would help us understand what actually *went* wrong:

> When a large number of people are followers of the Bible, the country naturally prospers (as did Great Britain and the United States in the nineteenth century and onwards) ...Without a strong Christian influence, the popular trend in a democratic country is envy, resentment, conflict, and the desire to enforce equality by taking from the productive and giving to the nonproductive members of the society. Democracy, like any other form of government, is only as good as the people who participate in it. (See Proverbs 14:34)

The late 1700s found European immigrants touching base in Australia and Argentina, both countries blessed by God with quite similar physical and climate conditions ideal for agriculture. Since then Australia has grown steadily toward a robust economy that it enjoys today, while that of Argentina for the past few decades until now remains spotty and frail. What's right with Australia?

Compare first-world North America with third-world South America. What's right with the U.S.A. and Canada?

What went right with Finland (facing the same red threat as other neighboring nations of Soviet Russia), the United States and Canada (with white immigrants from Europe as with South America)?

It is impossible to mentally or socially enslave a Bible-reading people. Horace Greeley

About ninety-three percent of Finland's population belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church. Majority of white citizens today of Australia, the United States and Canada are descendants of Bible-reading Christians from England, and later on from the Teutonic and Scandinavian countries in Europe.

Majority population of the Philippines, touted as the only Christian nation in Asia, sorry to say, just aren't Bible readers. Our church buildings may be filled with people Sunday after Sunday, yet only a small minority really take time to diligently read and study and—if indeed diligently—*follow through* with life application of the Bible. Why is this? Well, truth to tell, most leaders hereabouts (both religious and secular) do not encourage Bible reading for they themselves are not Bible readers (many of them readily admit this!). It therefore shows in the way most of them and their followers live! Ignoring Bible truths leads to *wrong thinking, which leads to wrong living.*

God ... is able to do IMMEASURABLY MORE than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us ... Ephesians 3:20

"Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ" (St. Jerome). The Author of life assures: *"If you continue to obey My teaching, you are truly My followers. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free"* (John 8:31-32 NCV). How can a people ignorant of Christ truly follow Him? Rightly defined, Christians are followers of Christ. How accurate then are we to claim ourselves to be a Christian nation, being one of the most corrupt and graft-ridden in the world, bringing shame to the name of Christ?

The Bible emphasizes spiritual empowering (Ephesians 3:20), rendering effective the practice of *real* love—the giving of self for the benefit of others. This is why in Bible-rooted countries, excellent service (coupled with productive creativity) has always been the benchmark, and the result is superior products and services that are inevitably widely patronized, making excellence-oriented people prosper because they are richly compensated. Finland's Nokia. England's Rolls Royce. U.S.A.'s Microsoft and Silicon Valley. And so on. If you wonder about Japan ("Made in Japan" was synonymous to poor quality in the 1930s), history has it that the principles governing product excellence were thoroughly infused into the Japanese system by the U.S. during the administration of Gen. Douglas MacArthur immediately following the end of World War II; this, together with the fervently nationalistic and service-focused Samurai spirit, catapulted Japan to what it is today.

On the other hand, self-focused people serve themselves first. Lip service abound and, therefore, the quality of goods and services suffers. *Me first* before country. The result is our continuing sad experience in the Philippines today (as in this wry, vengeful quote — "Do not cheat. Government hates competition."). When will this ever end?

Listen to God's promise: *Do not let this Book of the Law (the Bible) depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful* (Joshua 1:8 NIV). And another: *In anything you do, put God first and He will direct you and crown your efforts with success* (Proverbs 3:6 TLB). God is faithful in fulfilling His promises, but only to those who abide by His conditions.

Note that real success is based on sincere service to and unswerving respect for fellow men, usually resulting in enduring emotional, relational and material success. *The evil man gets rich for the moment, but the good man's reward lasts forever* (Proverbs 11:18).

Let's all learn well from history. Believe and appropriate God's promises and watch what happens!

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HIGH SCHOOL (YEAR 1 TO 4)

MEMBER PANA Truth in Advertising

Mavens

...from page 1

More than any group, the Velvet Mafia was the most adamant for such action to be taken. "This is one reason we were called the Velvet Mafia because we were very vocal about Malate and how to keep it clean," says Chito. "Not to make it antiseptic, but make more responsible partying available for everyone's enjoyment," Ricky continues.

And from Markus: "And now, they say, Malate is dead—which is absolutely, 100 percent not true!"

No it's not, as evidenced by the healthy amount of guests who frequent Nakpil and Orosa every night. They aren't just out for a beer; they're out for dinner. They're out for an aperitif or nice dessert. Malate isn't just about getting drunk and crazy anymore. "When they say Malate toned down, or it's not as hot as before, it's because we just weeded out the people we didn't want here," Ricky explains, not ungraciously. "We're 'adult' places, for the intelligent, sophisticated Filipino and expat market. We're not only bars, but restaurants. So now the same people who appreciated Malate before came back."

Sound snobbish? Maybe. But it's this very snobbery that will probably ensure the endurance of Fidel and other establishments like it. "If you look at Fidel, it's not your typical Malate place," Markus says of the resto that specializes in French-Moroccan fare, with a marble bar and tables on the first floor and a rich Moroccan-inspired dining/lounge area upstairs. Literati, cognoscenti, movers and shakers of politics and business are frequently seen here.

"It was also to uplift the area. There was no quality with some bars before," Markus continues. "The owners didn't invest very much. I don't want to include everyone who closed, of course, but people are very discerning nowadays. If you just throw a bar in their face and you think they'll go, they don't! They know what's happening out there, they travel. They know when they're being cheated."

DJ, the youngest member of the Velvet Mafia, says, "The market is getting more and more sophisticated. Why patronize an establishment that doesn't give you your money's worth?" While he admits that the places the Velvet Mafia own "charge quite a bit, you can't open an establishment without any concept and think that you can just serve food and it's as easy as that. It won't work."

Ernest Santiago, fashion and furniture designer, founder of the unparalleled Cocobanana, grand dame of Malate nightlife, self-professed "Godfather" (so there really *is* one in this story!) of all Malate, reiterates, "You can't just wait for clients and shove a drink at them. A place is made by three things: you, the personality behind the place; the ambiance, and the people you attract." He cites Sala. "It has a good ambiance, and always changes its menu. That's why it's lasted four years."

"So now when you put up a business, especially with entertaining, you have to be very careful and know the market you're attracting," Chito concludes.

Collectively, members of the Velvet Mafia run seven establishments (eight, if you count Colin's Mama, to open mid-2002 where Joy used to be)—giving the impression that the market is in their hands as well. Paired with claims of "weeding out the riff-raff" and "uplifting the area," accusations of them having a "monopoly" on Nakpil and Orosa cannot be avoided. They started when Colin—the most visible in the group and the unofficial "leader"—put up Joy, the country's first upper-market gay dance club. "I promoted myself as a personality, dressed up in drag, hosted street parties. But that's not really me, you know. That's me playing, having fun. I think people misunderstood that I had this big ego trip and wanted to monopolize everything in Malate. That's a lot of rubbish."

Ladida's ladies Yamby Yambao, topmost; Pride Exchange's Jomar Fleras and friends, above; Velveteen Colin Mackay and DJ Montano, right

The criticisms multiplied when he acquired the space next to Sala because he "couldn't have a beer garden open up beside me. I didn't want to be sandwiched between two bars." So, hastily coming up with a concept to save the aesthetic, quaint resto-row feel along his side of Nakpil, Thai restaurant People's Palace was born. "But it's not like we have an obsession about taking over. I just want to have a lifestyle," says the Irishman who came to Manila six years ago with nothing but a pack on his back and dreams to put up his own restaurant in his head.

DJ, who worked for him when Sala started and who focused on Indian cuisine while in a Swiss culinary school, agrees. "The restaurants are something to do, something to keep busy with. The perception of us taking over is just something people like to see. We enjoy what we do. We don't have big egos."

Still, they drive at a semblance of quality control. "We welcome any new establishment. Of course when it downgrades the area, that's when our velvet-ness comes out," Ricky jokes.

Markus acquiesces. "Certainly, we dominate a certain segment of the market. And really, if any new establishment fits in, welcome, welcome, welcome! If it's just another cheap bar, no concept, of course we are not so happy, but we cannot do anything about it either. We do not own this place. We are also all tenants."

One bar that's been enthusiastically welcomed, welcomed, welcomed by the Velvet Mafia represents the female segment of gay society: Ladida, a lesbian bar. Owned by Pia Abad, Viktoria Agbayani, Tina Gonzales, Betchay Mendoza and Yamby Yambao, it has had three months of steadily growing business.

The label "lesbian bar" was unintentional. The brand was unavoidable, however, especially as the other bar owners who were constructing their places at the same time couldn't help but notice that it was women who came to check on the progress of the work—and who had partners of the same sex to accompany them.

"So we decided to capitalize on that," Yamby says. "But we cater to everyone—gay, straight—we don't turn anybody away."

"Before, it used to bother us," says Pia. "But I think the controversy added more to the glamor of the place. We get a lot of walk-in customers because of that. It doesn't bother us—we're really lesbian-friendly!"

Homophobes may want to stay away from the second floor, though, where "hen parties" are sometimes held. But true enough, Ladida is fast attracting clientele from all sectors. Generally, the atmosphere is open and more importantly, anything but illicit. Wall-sized windows leave nothing to hide from the view of passers-by.

The ultra-upbeat and left-of-center concept of the bar couldn't have clicked anywhere better than in Malate, because, Tina says, "the place is more the character of the bar." That being: more honest, more accepting of alternative lifestyles and inclinations.

Ladida has also been tagged Orosa's "baby." Bar owners from the girls' former haunts in Makati drop in, along with other proprietors from surrounding restaurants after the last dinner guest has been served. "It's pretty cool to have neighbors like that," says Pia. "We say hello to each other, we have the same train of thought. Whenever they get the chance to promote the places, they make sure to promote the street. We try to help one another."

"When people ask us about the nice places here, we say Fidel for dinner, or you can visit the sex shop of Jomar," Tina adds.

She's referring to Jomar Fleras, social scientist and communications expert, who has added to the already-diverse melting pot that is Malate with Pride Exchange, another first-of-its-kind gay establishment in the country. A frequent traveler who makes it a point to visit the gay ghettos wherever he goes, he "was hoping someone would open a gay shop in the closest thing the Philippines has to a gay district." And so he did, on his 40th birthday last year.

Pride Exchange has beadwork done by gays, clothing by young gay designers, sex toys and gay literature and rare video tapes of Mr. Universe pageants—anything of interest to the homosexual crowd. Backed with Jomar's expertise in sexuality education, the store sells more than just sex aids—if you've got any questions pertaining to their use, or any sexual concern for that matter, he'll be more than happy to help.

Like Ladida, Pride Exchange is open to everyone—gays, straights, celebrities who come for the outfits, models, etc. "You know, people here are hungry for a sex store. This is normal in Oxford or Castro—but here, people are deprived. We get a lot of people who are giggly *pa rin*, but some of these gadgets are really beneficial, not just for novelty or gags."

Unlike Ladida and the other gay-owned establishments, however, Jomar had to fend off an attack from Couples for Christ, who sent a letter to the mayor questioning the choice of allowing him to set up shop. "I invited them to have a peek at the shop and they didn't find anything offensive," he explains. He assumes it was the anatomically correct mannequins that offended them the most. "You have mannequins with breasts, so what's the issue there?"

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza himself wasn't perturbed. Rather than censuring inanimate mannequins, his office keeps an eye out for more licentious behavior, which sometimes occurs during street parties. "They take off their clothes and whatever—we will not allow that. We must not lose control of a certain level of decency and good clean fun. We're trying to promote good business in this area."

His administration's most current contribution to the Malate area—and not just to Nakpil and Orosa—are European-style street lamps. "That's part of our effort to make it a safer place to visit, even the side streets, so that development will enter those as well. Lighting is a surefire formula to cause better business."

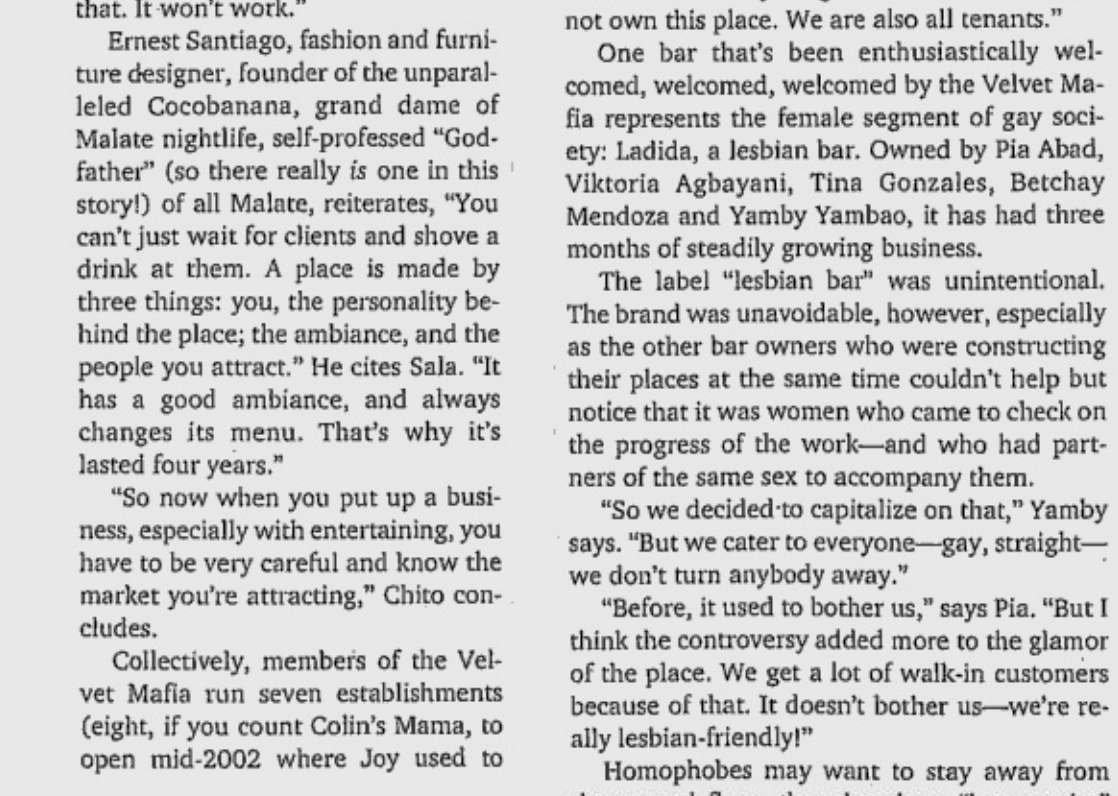
Other items on his agenda are: a more systematic method of assigning parking assistants and standardizing parking fees ("P30 per car for the whole district to manage the whole parking situation"); more organized traffic management; and a follow-through of complaints from the bar owners regarding the sidewalk vendors (reputed to be friends or relatives of the barangay captains) who sell beer at rock-bottom prices sans legitimate permits. More than a price war, the bar owners are more concerned about the return of uncontrollable youngsters roaming the streets. "It causes a lot of trouble," remarks Yamby. (Pia, for one, is strict about letting drunk customers go without sobering them up first. "I tell the bartender to give them coffee, free.")

"I will not allow it," the Mayor answers. "Even if they are barangay captains or people close to City Hall. In a free enterprise, each business will develop its own clientele, but legitimate complaints, like unfair competition, abusive techniques like bringing the bar outside—we will not allow." According to him, two warnings, "given all the chances," issued by his office—whether they be for illegal selling or licentious behavior—are enough to halt an operation.

"The whole district," he continues, "is part of a vision of a city that is colorful, cultural, historical, and entertaining for both locals and foreigners. Malate is a district that we have targeted for this development. From the very start of our administration, we sustained, we nursed it, into what it is now. It has a very distinct character which is inherent, so it has been given competition by The Fort, Makati, Quezon City, but it has sustained its own clientele because it has a charm of its own."

"Malate's been always there. Malate's eternal," Ricky says, just as confident. Establishments will thrive and throb, then wilt and fade away, as all things go. But they'll keep on resurrecting and reincarnating, drawn to the quality and character of Malate that everybody seems to understand and yet none can define.

"It's not artificial. It's created, not cloned," Chito and Markus agree. "It's a lifestyle."



Drilon urges GMA: Rethink Benipayo appointment

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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2,000 flunk drug tests for drivers

By Gerald Lacuarta

ABOUT 2,000 applicants for driver's licenses in Metro Manila flunked drug tests mandated by the Land Transportation Office last October, according to records of the Dangerous Drugs Board.

"The figures involved drug tests

2,000/A18

Solons chide Estrada for GMA 'snub'

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr., *PDI Visayas Bureau*
Christine Avendaño and Rocky Nazareno

SNUBBING a President who wants to visit you in a detention cell is an act of discourtesy. It is rude and shameful.

These were the reactions of three administration legislators to ousted President Joseph Estrada's alleged refusal to see President Macapagal-Arroyo, who reportedly tried to pay him a surprise visit at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center on Saturday.

"In this episode, Erap is the loser and Gloria is the winner," Sen. Joker Arroyo yesterday said.

Senate President Franklin Drilon described Estrada's refusal as an "act of discourtesy" that "promotes division in our country."

If Estrada "snubbed" the President just to gain sympathy for his plight, "he did the wrong thing with the right person at the right occasion," Arroyo said.

The ailing Estrada is being tried for plunder and other charges in the Sandiganbayan.

"Erap wants to make a medical trip abroad but how can he plead for that when he refuses to talk to the very person who can help," Arroyo said in a statement.

"*Siya ang humihingi, siya pa ang galit* (He is asking for help and yet he is the one who is angry)," Arroyo added.

He noted that Ms Macapagal had "gone out of her way to hear first-hand what her predecessor wanted (yet) Erap bungled the opportunity."

Arroyo chided Estrada for acting as if "he was not once upon a time the President of the Philippines.

"He has learned nothing from his tenure as President—that however one may disagree with the President, the President is entitled to the respect due the office," he said.

A member of the House of Representatives also sympathized with Ms Macapagal.

"It's plain rudeness on his (Estrada's) part," Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez said.

Gonzalez said that while it was within Estrada's right to refuse to see the President, he should have extended her some courtesy.

House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II said, "there is nothing shameful about what the President did, if the reports are true. What is shameful is the former President's refusal to see her."

Gonzales said Estrada should have met with Ms Macapagal "out of respect to the President's office."

SOLONS/A20

LOCAL COLOR EDWIN BACASMAS

Wearing colorful tribal attire, President Macapagal dances with the Tigwahonons during the Kaamulan Festival on Sunday in Malaybalay City in Bukidnon.

Nani: I just took a peek at Erap

By Juliet L. Javellana
and Carlito Pablo

"*SINISILIP ko lang* (I just took a peek)."

Justice Secretary Hernando "Nani" Perez admitted to trying to catch a glimpse of deposed President Joseph Estrada on Saturday at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center (VMMC) in Quezon City.

Perez said he was at the premises of the VMMC at 8 a.m. because he was told that he and President Macapagal-Arroyo would board a helicopter there for their visit to Batangas.

The landing pad is adjacent to the suite where Estrada and his son Jinggoy are detained.

Perez said it turned out that he came too early because at that time the President was still at the National Broadcasting Network (PTV 4) on Visayas Avenue, near the hospital.

He denied that he and the President had tried to pay Estrada a surprise visit.

"I have no intention of seeing him because I'm prosecuting him. It would be unethical for me to see him. I can only see him if his lawyers are around," Perez told the INQUIRER late Saturday night after he accompanied the Presi-

NANI/A18

AMERICAN Oleg Zachary Kis visits the house of Abu Sayyaf hostage Ediborah Yap in Lamitan, Basilan. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Ousted leader wants case decided in the streets

ANALYSIS

By Amando Doronila

DEPOSED President Joseph Estrada has stepped up his vicious attack on the Sandiganbayan and even branded the Supreme Court as a "Davide rubber stamp" so he would be allowed to leave the country for medical treatment abroad or go into exile.

It is not just an assault on the judicial system that he has accused of stampeding him to jail. It is an attack on the political system itself.

In his relentless assault, Estrada is pushing to the point of no return the test of wills between himself and the Macapagal administration. Reduced to fundamentals, the issue at stake is a clash between lawlessness and the integrity and credibility of legal processes.

Estrada has put himself above and beyond the law when he dismissed his lawyers, rejected state-appointed public defenders, and brought his case directly to the judgment of the people.

According to him, he has lost confidence in the fairness and impartiality of the judicial system, making baseless allegations that have shocked even lawyers themselves.

In doing so, Estrada has transformed his criminal trial in the Sandiganbayan into a political one in which the case will be judged not by evidence in a calm atmosphere but by passion and emotion of the rabble in the streets.

OUSTED/A19

Now showing: 'Ina' Part II

By Carlito Pablo

EVEN before the results from the political box office are in, the President has already followed her controversial "Ina ng Bayan" (Mother of the Nation) commercial with a sequel.

On Saturday night, television stations began airing the second

NOW/A20

American offers to swap himself for Ediborah

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

LAMITAN, Basilan—An American businessman is offering himself as hostage to the Abu Sayyaf in exchange for Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap.

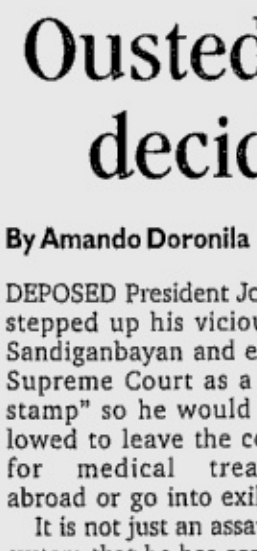
"If offering one's self to save others . . . pleases God, then it's my will," said Oleg Zachary Kis, 44, a member of the Baptist congregation. "It's my Christian faith that moved me."

Kis arrived here late Saturday afternoon and visited the family of Yap, who was seized from a hospital here by the Abu Sayyaf bandits more than nine months ago.

"I'd like to help the family of Ediborah Yap, to show that I care and feel concerned about them," said Kis, who is involved in remodeling and renovating old houses in Pennsylvania.

But Maj. John Deedrick, leader of 34 US soldiers assigned to the Philippine Army's 18th Infantry Battalion for the Balikatan 02-1 war exercises in the

AMERICAN/A20



LEUNG: Justice in his death still elusive.

LEUNG CASE

Slay 'brains' still unknown

SPECIAL REPORT

By Jerry Esplanada

BAGUIO City—A year ago today, the bodies of Giancarlo Angelo Leung and his friend Tihani Tingal, both with bullet wounds in the head, were found in separate locations in Pampanga.

The two were abducted on March 8, 2001 near Leung's house in this city. Three days later, their bodies were found—Leung's in a burned-out cogon field in Mexico town and Tingal's, in San Simon town.

Because Leung was the Grand Princeps of the University of the Philippines Baguio chapter of the Beta Sigma fraternity, the kidnap-slay was immediately tagged as yet another outbreak of fraternity violence. But not even the fraternities believed this. Leung's parents think a love triangle is a more likely explanation.

"Serious efforts should be made in finding out who the brains of this heinous crime really is," Charles Leung, Giancarlo's father, told the INQUIRER. The mastermind is the "missing piece in this puzzle," he added.

But the puzzle apparently no longer interests the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of the Philippine National Police, which last January declared the Leung-Tingal case "solved."

SLAY/A20

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, MARCH 11, 2002

Second FRONT PAGE

Rethink poll appointments, GMA urged

SENATE President Franklin Drilon has asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to seriously "rethink the situation" of Commission on Elections chair Alfredo Benipayo, who is facing confirmation at the congressional Commission on Appointments, saying the poll body has been "seriously paralyzed" by the vicious infighting among the seven commissioners.

Drilon, who chairs the 25-member bicameral CA, said this state affairs cannot be allowed to continue because of the coming barangay elections in May and the Sangguniang Kabataan elections next year.

"I am convinced that unless the deadlock in the Comelec is resolved immediately, we will face serious difficulties in 2004 when the (national) elections come," said Drilon.

The commission has been divided into two bitterly opposing camps, the four commissioners appointed by ousted ex-President Joseph Estrada—Luz Tancangco, Ralph Lantion, Mehol Sadain and Rufino Javier—against the three appointees of President Macapagal-Arroyo—Benipayo and commissioners Resurreccion Borra and Florentino Tuazon Jr.

The two camps have bickered on almost every issue facing the electoral body, particularly the holding of elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao last year and the much-delayed Comelec modernization program.

Tancangco, Javier, Lantion and Sadain last week filed a joint opposition asking the CA to reject the confirmation of Benipayo, Borra and Tuazon for alleged "repeated gross violations of the Constitution and Administration Code of the Philippines."

Six senior congressional leaders are to meet today with all seven commissioners in a bid to break the deadlock in the poll body.

Opposition Senators Blas Ople, Edgardo Angara and Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and Speaker Jose de Venecia will try to reconcile the differences between the two camps.

Drilon's apprehension over Benipayo's confirmation was apparently sparked by the four Estrada-appointed commissioners' petition with the CA.

"I don't know whether the President should reappoint Benipayo, Borra and Tuazon, but this issue must be resolved," Drilon said.

He said this was the only instance that he could recall in which the confirmation of a member of the Comelec was opposed by his own colleagues in the commission.

The Tancangco camp also accused Benipayo and the two others of violating the "time-honored and constitutional principle of collegiality at the Comelec which ensures the independence of the poll body from political influence."

As this developed, a group calling itself the Voice of Truth for Genuine Electoral Reforms (Voters) also opposed the confirmation of the three commissioners in a resolution sent to the CA.

The 10 individuals who signed the resolution blamed Benipayo, Borra and Tuazon for the purported delay of the Comelec's modernization program.

Two of the modernization program's components—the voters registration and identification system (VRIS) and automated counting and consolidation of returns system (ACCORS), both under Tancangco—have been stalled by the unavailability of funds.

An earlier bidding for the VRIS had been cancelled by former Comelec chair Harriet Demetriou who asked for the review of the contract with the winning bidder, the Photokina Marketing Corp.

Benipayo, who had earlier dropped the VRIS and ACCORS projects, has since said the Comelec was willing to reconsider it. *Rocky Nazareno and Blanche S. Rivera*

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CA resolves jails bureau leadership row

By G. Lacuarta

THE LEADERSHIP crisis at the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology (BJMP) has been resolved temporarily after the Court of Appeals dismissed on a technicality the petition for certiorari filed by one of the two contenders for the bureau's top post.

The CA's move thus upheld the Oct. 29 resolution of Quezon City Judge Modesto Juanson declaring as null and void President Macapagal-Arroyo's appointment of Senior Supt. Josue Engaño to head the bureau.

Chief Supt. Arturo Alit thus steps in as BJMP officer-in-charge once again.

In a 15-page decision, the CA said Engaño erred in asking for a writ of certiorari because the special civil action applies only to "correction of errors or jurisdiction or grave abuse of discretion amounting to lack or excess of jurisdiction" not covered in a lower court's resolution.

"In sum, petitioner's available and proper remedy against such decision is not certiorari but rather an appeal of the judgment. We need not overemphasize that existence of and availability of the right of appeal are antithetical to the availment of the special civil action for certiorari... in the final analysis, the special action of certiorari will not lie in this case," the CA said.

The decision by the CA's Tenth Division, which was penned by Justice Conrado Vasquez Jr., erased any existing legal impediments to the execution of Judge Juanson's order.

It will be recalled that the leadership crisis at the bureau began with the appointment of Engaño as BJMP chief on Sept. 6, a move challenged by Alit and Interior Secretary Jose Lina.

Lina and Alit had argued that Engaño did not deserve to be BJMP chief because he lacked qualifications for the post. Alit noted that Engaño did not have a one-star rank and career executive service eligibility.

On these grounds, Alit filed a quo warranto case, which Judge Juanson ruled in his favor.

However, before Juanson could issue his ruling, Engaño filed the petition for certiorari at the CA on Oct. 22, alleging bias on the part of Juanson.

The long drawn-out squabble forced Lina to head the BJMP himself temporarily until the CA could decide on the issue or the President appointed another candidate.

The qualifications issue was not touched by the CA, which said that "such qualification issues are not for this Court to decide in this proceedings but rather before the trial court in the quo warranto suit."

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Gov't keeps door open to MILF

THE MACAPAGAL administration is giving the Moro Islamic Liberation Front all chances to prove that it is sincere in talking peace with the government, presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said yesterday.

Tiglao said the government has not judged the MILF's sincerity even in the face of charges by the military that rebels have repeatedly violated the ceasefire agreement between the two parties.

"We have to be patient and try to pursue the peace process but this doesn't prevent our military from enforcing the laws if the MILF is undertaking any criminal action," Tiglao said.

Tiglao said the government will pursue the peace negotiations up to the "point that we are convinced that they are not serious."

"We have to respect their word," Tiglao said when asked about the government's response to denials by the MILF that they were not involved in supposed attacks against government forces in Central Mindanao.

But Tiglao said that "if there is a quantum of evidence showing that they are not keeping to their word, then we have to call for an end of the peace talks, but right now there is no critical mass of information."

The government has suspended formal negotiations with the MILF and talks are now confined through back-channeling talks. *Carlito Pablo*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, March 11, 2002
4th Week of Lent
1st Reading: Is 65:17-21
Gospel: Jn 4:43-54

In those days Jesus left Samaria for Galilee. Jesus himself said that no prophet is recognized in his own country. Yet the Galileans welcomed him when he arrived, because of all the things he had done in Jerusalem during the Festival and which they had seen. For they, too, had gone to the feast.

Jesus went back to Cana of Galilee where he had changed the water into wine. At Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill, and when he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and asked him to come and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

Jesus said, "Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe!" The official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies." And Jesus replied, "Go, your son is living."

The man had faith in the word that Jesus spoke to him and went his way. He was already going down the hilly road when his servants met him with this news, "Your son has recovered!" So he asked them at what hour the child had begun to recover and they said to him, "The fever left him yesterday in the afternoon about one o'clock." And the father realized that it was the time when Jesus told him, "Your son is living." And he became a believer, he and all his family.

Jesus performed this second miraculous sign when he returned from Judea to Galilee.

Commentary

Jesus makes it clear he doesn't want our faith to depend on "signs and wonders" yet John took great pains to gather up these 'signs" carefully and present them to us as something precious and important.

Undoubtedly, miracles of healing happen, but by definition they are not the norm no matter how great our faith. They serve as signs, witnessing that there is a power greater than sickness and death. It occasionally breaks through in "miracles." More often, we see it in the little things, a hungry child sharing food; the many people who continue to work for education, environment, human rights, reconciliation, never giving up even though others would say it's a losing battle. The reality of faith, hope and love in our wounded world is the true miracle and sign of God's presence with us.

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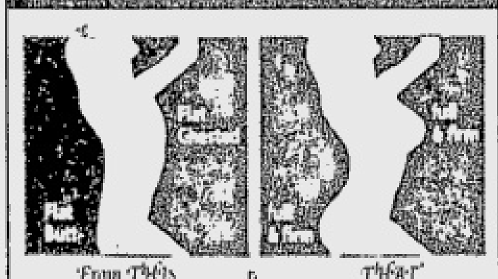
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Cell phones banned in hospital ERs, ORs

By Blanche S. Rivera

HEALTH Secretary Manuel Dayrit has banned the use of mobile phones and other personal communication services (PCS) in the emergency and operating rooms of all hospitals because of the danger they pose to the operation of sensitive medical equipment.

Dayrit ordered all patients and hospital staff to restrict the use of their cell phones in areas where critical medical devices are being used.

The ban covers the intensive care units, nurseries, labor and delivery rooms, pediatrics and diagnostic areas, imaging units and clinical laboratories.

"Appropriate warnings must be posted by managers of health facilities in the above-named areas," Dayrit said in Department Circular No. 67 signed on Feb. 19.

The health secretary explained that PCS and other wireless devices could cause electromagnetic interference when used near a heart monitor, ventilator, cardiac pacemaker, incubator and infant radiant warmer, dialysis unit and electric wheelchair.

He said patients and health professionals must maintain a distance of 1.5 meters from the sensitive medical devices when using their mobile phones.

These medical devices include the implantable insulin pump, electrocardiograph machine (ECG), electroencephalograph machine (EEG), electromyograph machine (EMG), infusion pump, telemetry patient monitoring system and the electronically operated height-adjustable bed.

Dayrit said patients with hearing aids should use a hands-free set because holding the cell phone would interfere with the functioning of the hearing instrument.

Those with cardiac pacemakers should place their cell phones at least 20 cm away from the equipment.

Pilipinos are known to be the biggest users of mobile phones and short message services in the world, sending about 150 million text messages every day.

House to take up 2 major bills tonight

THE HOUSE is expected to wrap up by tonight the plenary debate and amendments to the controversial Special Purpose Asset Vehicle bill and the proposed Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

The House may even vote for the approval of the two measures on second reading, House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II yesterday said.

With Congress set to go on a one-month break starting on Friday, Gonzales said the chamber would also try to approve this week the proposed Securitization Act and approve on second reading the Absentee Voting Bill.

House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla said he and like-minded representatives should be allowed to finish the interpellation of the SPAV bill and put in all the necessary amendments before it is voted on.

Padilla, who is scheduled to conduct the interpellation in today's session, said he would focus on the "macro" aspect or the "general philosophy" of the measure.

The bill, mainly authored by Speaker Jose de Venecia, seeks to create a legal framework to allow investors to buy up the non-performing loans and other idle assets of banks to help the ailing banking industry and raise badly needed funds to revive the economy.

Padilla has said that the bill appears to be designed to bail out the banks which would make it class legislation.

He said he would be scrutinizing the arguments of the committee on banks and financial subsidiaries that the SPAV was needed to handle the banks' increased NPAs because of the economic downturn.

Rep. Jaime Lopez, chair of the banks committee which supports the bill, has cited Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas records showing P294.79 billion in non-performing loans and P191 billion in real and other properties owned or acquired by financial institutions, or a total of P486.23 billion in NPAs, as of Dec. 31, 2001.

The SPAV is meant to help enhance the banks' liquidity.

Padilla questioned if SPAV was really needed as it was by no means certain that the NPAs could be disposed of so easily under the SPAV in an economic downturn.

He said borrowers were being "timid" now.

"There are no takers. So SPAV would be useless," Padilla said.

Christine Avendaño

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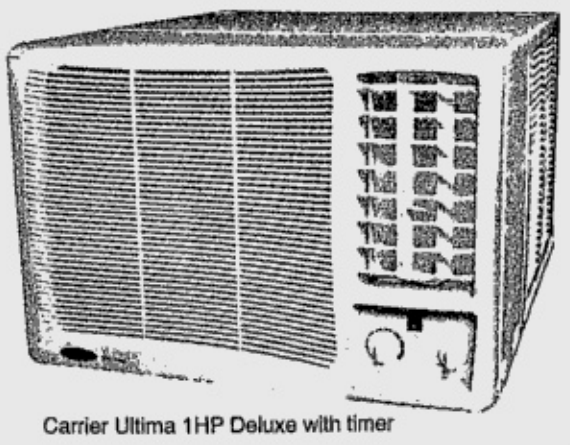
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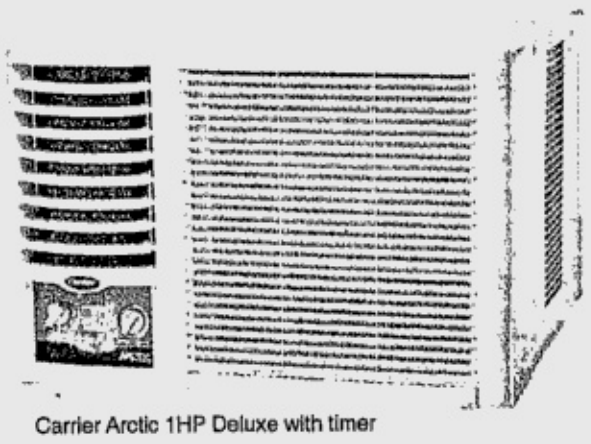
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S'pore, Japan, HK judged least corrupt economies in Asia; RP rating improves

SINGAPORE—Singapore, Japan and Hong Kong have the least corrupt economies in Asia, but corruption remains high in the rest of the region and is getting worse in some places, a survey of foreign business executives said.

The Philippines, where the level of corruption was described by the Political and Economic Risk Consultancy (PERC) as "bad," scored 8.0, an improvement on last year's 9.0.

PERC noted a "marked improvement" in the Philippines after President Macapagal-Arroyo took over from Joseph Estrada last year, but stressed that Manila's score remained well below the average grade of 5.

Corruption risks becoming intractable as Asian governments and companies use the collapse of US energy giant Enron Corp. as an excuse to resist demands for greater transparency especially by the United States, PERC said.

In a survey of 1,000 expatriate businessmen working in Asia, Singapore again emerged as the least corrupt among the 12 Asian economies covered. The city-state, along with Japan and Hong Kong were the only economies to have above-average scores.

Positive side

On the positive side, the survey revealed that perceived corruption is lower compared to a year ago in the majority of the region's economies.

However, "with the exception of a couple of countries in Asia, the problem of corruption remains far too high for comfort," it said.

In some of the places where the problem is worst, "it is perceived to be growing."

"What is particularly interesting is that in almost every country the range of grades was very narrow. There was a broad consensus on the magnitude of corruption as a problem for business," the survey said.

In a scale of one to 10 with one being the best possible score, Singapore was graded 0.90, followed by Japan (3.25) and Hong Kong (3.33).

"Of the countries covered here, only Singapore really stands out as having a reputation that matches or even surpasses that of developed Western economies like the US, the UK and Australia," it said.

The rest scored below the average grade of five.

Malaysia was judged the fourth least corrupt with a score of 5.71, better than the 6.0 it got in 2001, followed by South Korea with 5.75, down from 7.0 last year.

Taiwan was graded 5.83, beating China's 7.0, which was an improvement on its 7.88 rating in 2001.

Indonesia most corrupt

Indonesia was seen as the most corrupt with a grade of 9.92, its worst score since the survey started in 1995. India was the second most corrupt with a score of 9.17, slightly down from 9.25 last year.

Vietnam got the third worst score of 8.25, but this was sharply down from 9.75 in 2001.

"It is hard to believe that the problem of corruption in Indonesia could grow worse, but that is what is happening. The entire national legal system is in shambles, so the courts do not offer much protection," the Hong Kong-based PERC said.

In Malaysia, the problem "has been more one of poor corporate governance than outright corruption."

Efforts to impose more rigorous regulatory standards worldwide following the Enron debacle could result in more Asian companies being unable to meet the new requirements, it said.

On the other hand, Asia could also resist Western pressure for reforms by citing the shortcomings of corporate America as mirrored in the Enron bankruptcy saga.

"The US is certainly not going to stop pressuring Asian governments to adopt certain standards and practices, but if the US starts being viewed like an emperor with no clothes telling everyone else how to dress, this could be deeply resented by those coming under this pressure," PERC warned. *AFP*

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Moro rebels kill 2 lumberjacks

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Suspected Moro separatist rebels killed two lumberjacks and took four others hostage in a remote village of Sibuco, Zamboanga del Norte, Friday, the military said Saturday.

Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual, commander of the Army's 44th Infantry Battalion, said the lumberjacks were hunting wild boar when they were seized by about 40 rebels led by a Commander Pol Manamat.

Manamat was reportedly the right-hand man of slain MILF leader Said Aban.

But Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, denied that Manamat belonged to the rebel group.

"We do not have any commander named Pol Manamat. Maybe he belongs to other armed groups in the area," Kabalu said, maintaining that the MILF did not attack civilians.

Pascual said the rebels tied up the victims before taking their personal belongings, cash, power saws and other logging equipment.

Pascual identified the slain lumberjacks as Manuel Medel and Regino Saavedra, both of Sibuco town.

He said the hostages were Felino de los Reyes, Manuel Lacastesantos, Romeo Tulio and Ruben Basilio, also of Sibuco.

Pascual said Medel and Saavedra tried to escape but were shot and killed on the spot.

Tulio, who managed to flee, reported the incident to the military.

The Agence France Presse, however, quoting the Philippine military on Sunday, said that after the two lumberjacks were executed, three others were recovered barely alive.

AFP also said the army dispatched troops to go after the abductors, who were believed to be followers of detained Muslim leader Nur Misuari of the Moro National Liberation Front.

Misuari is awaiting trial for allegedly leading a pocket rebellion that killed over 100 people in Jolo, Sulu, in November.

Early reports that identified the attackers as members of the rival MILF, were later refuted by one of the survivors, according to the military.

The motive for the attack was not known, although officials believe it was meant to scare lumber firms into paying extortion money.

"They were told to kneel and say their prayers and (the gunmen) shot them one after the other and then threw them into a ravine in the jungle" where they were left for dead, said Capt. Noel Detoyato, Southern Command spokesperson.

He said soldiers later found three of the lumberjacks barely alive, while the bodies of the two others were recovered.

Rolly A. San Juan, PDI Mindanao Bureau, with an AFP report

AFP warns MILF against attacking US troops in Basilan

THE ARMED Forces yesterday warned the Moro Islamic Liberation Front "against attacking US troops involved in training exercises in Basilan province.

The MILF "has no business going around Basilan" and would be dealt with if they interfere in joint US-Philippine military operations against the smaller Abu Sayyaf rebels operating in the island, military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said.

"They are not in a position to threaten us. We have not recognized any of their camps and they should not be telling the government what to do," Adan said.

The 12,500-strong MILF is the country's main Muslim insurgent group. It has signed a truce with Manila, but President Macapagal-Arroyo last week temporarily suspended peace talks amid allegations of unprovoked attacks by the rebels in recent weeks.

Some 160 US Special Forces are deployed in Basilan in training exercises with local troops targetting the smaller Abu Sayyaf group, self-styled Islamic fighters with known links to the al-Qaida terror network.

The gunmen are also holding hostage a US Christian missionary couple and a Filipina nurse.

The MILF's number two man, Mohammad Murad, last week warned of possible firefights between his group and Filipino troops accompanied by US advisers.

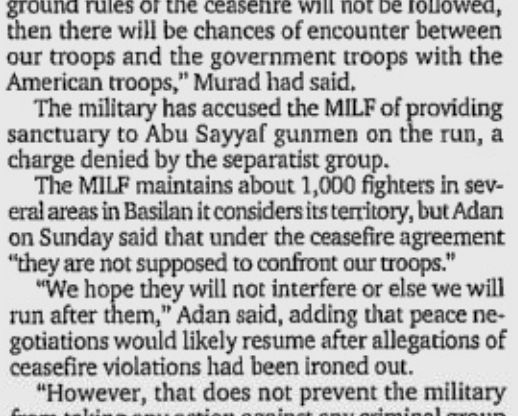
"What we are apprehensive of is that if the ground rules of the ceasefire will not be followed, then there will be chances of encounter between our troops and the government troops with the American troops," Murad had said.

The military has accused the MILF of providing sanctuary to Abu Sayyaf gunmen on the run, a charge denied by the separatist group.

The MILF maintains about 1,000 fighters in several areas in Basilan it considers its territory, but Adan on Sunday said that under the ceasefire agreement "they are not supposed to confront our troops."

"We hope they will not interfere or else we will run after them," Adan said, adding that peace negotiations would likely resume after allegations of ceasefire violations had been ironed out.

"However, that does not prevent the military from taking any action against any criminal group or any unauthorized armed groups operating in the area. We will continue to discharge our mission of protecting the people, wherever that may be," the general said. ***AFP***



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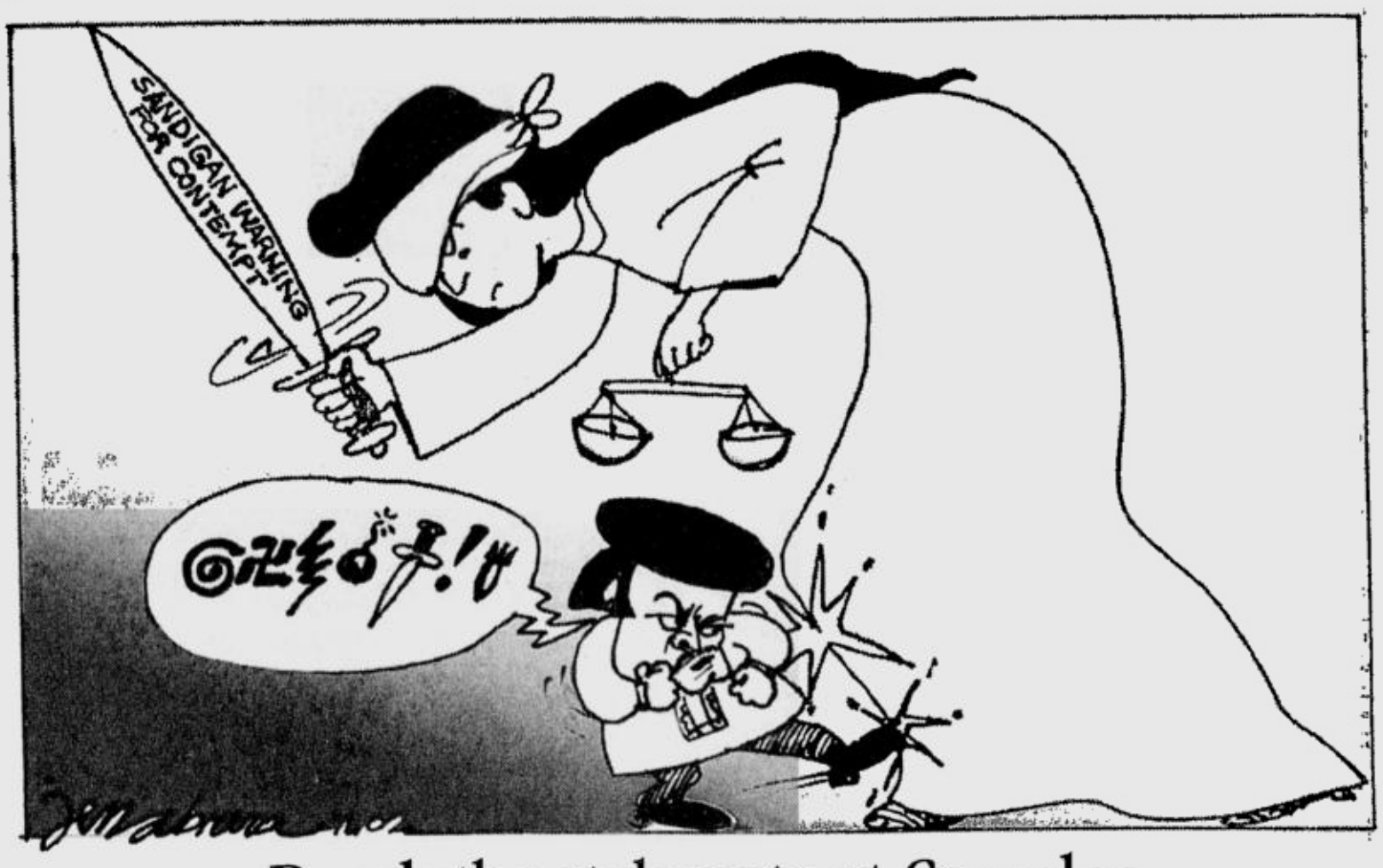

RJ's story

DESPITE the grandstanding of Sen. Sergio Osmeña III, the resumption of the congressional investigation of the Abu Sayyaf's mysterious escape from the Lamitan hospital in Basilan last June deserves our fullest support. The citizenry must throw its full weight behind the inquiry, in which certain Armed Forces officials occupy the hot seat, not in spite of the military's role during People Power II, but because of it.

EDITORIALS

The escape of the bandit group on June 2, from an enclosure completely surrounded by government troops, defies easy explanation. It is yet another unresolved scandal that demands closure. Last year's separate probes in the House and Senate, which featured a parade of witnesses led by local parish priest Fr. Cirilo Nacorda and which made Scout Ranger Capt. Ruben Guinolbay a household name, raised expectations, but by year's end a resolution seemed as distant as ever.

This year's hearings, however, promise to be different.

At the least, our legislators seem to have finally gotten their act together. The hearings are now bicameral, an arrangement which does not only avoid both duplication of efforts and scandal fatigue. It also helps each house of Congress steel its resolve, to call it as they see it—even, if necessary, at the expense of the military.

The lack of intense media attention has also worked in the probe's favor, with fewer legislators—Osmeña, of course, excepted—tempted to play up to the camera.

The main difference, however, lies in the testimony of one special witness: RJ Recio, the 8-year-old hostage who, together with businessman Reghis Romero and one other hostage, walked to freedom last June. Literally. The abductors had shown them the way out, RJ recalled, and as they were walking out he even heard one bandit tell others that the three hostages had already been paid for.

This account is the direct opposite of Romero's own testimony last year, when he said they made their escape during a moment of confusion inside the hospital and during a lull outside. It also runs counter to the military's version of Romero's getaway. But RJ's story rings with the sound of truth.

His account finds support in the testimony of Nacorda's many witnesses—ordinary Basilan folk, guileless residents and vendors who lived or worked outside the hospital compound and thus were in a position to see the mysterious escape for what it really was: a coordinated exit for the bandits. His story also reinforces the testimony of nurse Fe de la Cruz, who saw an aide of Maj. Gen. Romeo Dominguez, then head of the Army contingent pursuing the Abu Sayyaf, open an attaché case "stacked with P1,000 bills."

Edsa II was an appeal for greater transparency in public matters and greater accountability from public officials. In this light, the military's withdrawal of support from a discredited regime, within the framework provided by the Constitution, could be understood as one more object lesson in the limits of political legitimacy. But those limits apply to the armed services as well.

If, as seems more and more likely, certain military officials will be proven to have acted dishonorably during the siege of Lamitan, the defense establishment's refusal to distinguish between the acts of the gallant many and the venal few can only hurt it.

Serge's kite

LAST December, Sen. Sergio Osmeña III made a sensational allegation: that the President and the military's top brass knew that a P17-million ransom had been paid to the Abu Sayyaf to release businessman Reghis Romero and his companions. In fact, his insinuation that people associated with Malacañang may have been involved in the actual payment led to the resumption of the congressional investigation. He even mentioned the use of his single-engine plane, dubbed "Saranggola ni Serge" (Serge's Kite), as one possible reason he was approached with the information.

But at the rate he is going, Osmeña will be hard-pressed to prove his allegation. That some degree of collusion between military officers and Abu Sayyaf bandits was in effect sometime during the Lamitan siege seems more and more beyond doubt. But to suppose that this also means that the Palace was involved is a fatal leap in logic.

Osmeña's behavior in this matter has been a case of one dramatic jump forward followed by a series of small, successive steps backward. As it turns out, Serge's Kite was not even used at all. Could it be he was only using it to draw political lightning to the administration?

Break the stalemate at Comelec

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

CONGRESS has reset the nationwide barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan elections to July 15. That's only four months away. Then the all-important presidential elections will be held in 2004, only two years from now. It is time for the Commission on Elections to get cracking and prepare for the thousand and one things that have to be done before the elections. But the Comelec can't get anything done because the commissioners are fighting among themselves.

The Comelec commissioners are divided 4-3 with the group of Chair Alfredo Benipayo, Resurreccion Borra and Florentino Tuason Jr. on the losing end. The other group is led by Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco with Rufino Javier, Ralph Lantion and Mehol K. Sadain as members. The trouble is that the latter four have already previously been confirmed by the Commission on Appointments while the Benipayo group is still unconfirmed. The commission will hold today the confirmation hearing of Benipayo.

The Comelec has been in a stalemate long enough and the Commission on Appointments should stop being wishy-washy and either confirm or reject the appointment of Benipayo. Merely bypassing him will prolong the stalemate. But that stalemate has to be broken because the Comelec has to work quickly to prepare for the coming two elections.

The common complaint against Benipayo is that he is a poor leader. Instead of courting the cooperation of the four opposition commissioners, he fights with them. He has failed to consolidate the Comelec into a cohesive collegial body. A good leader would have, by now, gotten their cooperation. As an executive judge in the Supreme Court supervising lower court judges, Benipayo is used to acting with the authority of the Supreme Court. He is used to having his orders and decisions obeyed by the lower court judges.

In the Comelec, however, he is co-equal with the six other commissioners. The Comelec is a collegial body and all decisions have to be agreed upon by a majority of the seven members. The chair is essentially only a member of the commission en banc and presides over it merely as "first among equals." He derives his power from the law and the commission en banc.

But the majority of the commissioners complain that Benipayo seems to believe that he is the Comelec or that the Comelec is a one-man commission.

It is shocking that four commissioners are themselves opposing the confirmation of their boss, Benipayo, and the two other commissioners, Borra and Tuason.

If Benipayo is not confirmed today (Congress adjourns on Wednesday), President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo should be given a free hand to appoint another chair to break the stalemate. But if he is not rejected and merely bypassed, he will most likely be reappointed and the intramurals will continue. But time flies and won't wait till the commissioners resolve their differences. Rep. Prospero Pichay said Benipayo should resign to give the President a free hand to appoint another chair. I say the Commission on Appointments should stop being wishy-washy for the same reason. Don't just bypass him. Either confirm or reject him.

But how can he be confirmed when there are many opposing his confirmation? The principal opposition of the four majority commissioners to Benipayo is that the chair's minority group is making decisions without any resolution authorizing said decisions from a majority of the commissioners. Worse, Benipayo does not implement resolutions approved by the majority group.

There are many instances of these sins cited in the affidavit complaint but two of the most important are that Benipayo allegedly bought for himself a brand-new Toyota Grandia worth P1,147,818 without any public bidding and without any Comelec resolution authorizing it. The other is that Benipayo, by his lonesome self, approved the P10,210,000 budget for the Information Campaign Activity Plan for the Aug. 14, 2001 plebiscite in the expanded Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, without the requisite Comelec en banc resolution.

These are also two of the reasons why lawyer Dante B. Barcenal is opposing Benipayo's confirmation. Barcenal noted that Benipayo assumed office in the first week of February 2001, and that not long thereafter, or some time on Feb. 23, 2001, he started the processing for the negotiated purchase of a luxury motor vehicle for his personal use.

Benipayo has argued that he has a right to a service vehicle as the commissioners themselves are given service vehicles. This argument, however, completely evades or misses the issue. What is being questioned is not his right to a vehicle, but his power to purchase it by his lonesome self, without due regard to the approved procedure for acquisition and without coursing the requisition through the commission en banc, as similar purchases usually do.

Besides, the unit is too expensive and the Office of the President had issued a memorandum against the purchase of luxury vehicles. In fact, she has ordered the return or sale of luxury vehicles already purchased by the Department of Education.

As if that were not enough, Barcenal said Benipayo "unlawfully approved and reimbursed his purchases of medicines...for his personal use as well as "blood chemistry examination" for himself from the Comelec funds without a resolution from the commission. These medicines and blood analysis, Barcenal said, have nothing to do with his being chair of the Comelec.

Here's more: Benipayo spent P564,593 of Comelec funds to attend a seminar abroad to which he had not been invited (the invitation was actually sent to Teresita Dy-Llaco, a consultant but Benipayo used it for himself) and without a Comelec en banc resolution.

* * *

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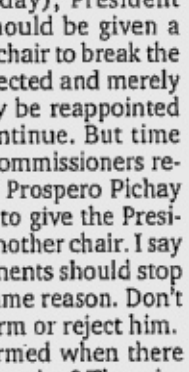
Songs women would love to hate

THERE'S THE RUB



Conrado de Quiros

I COMPLETELY forgot that Friday was International Women's Day. Again, better late than never.

Over the years, in the course of accompanying people on the guitar (something I've been hard pressed to do of late because of gouty fingers), I've been struck by the lyrics of some songs. These songs are generally old, from the '40s, '50s, '60s and '70s. I've always taken their lyrics for granted, and consequently was bowled over when their meaning dawned on me at some point. I don't know that they greatly contributed to retarding the women's cause. On one hand, I appreciate the power of popular culture to ravage the unconscious, but on the other, I know people rarely listen to lyrics, particularly English ones. But what can I say? Boy, am I glad we survived these songs, or words.

These are by no means representative of the culture of the time. And doubtless, readers will have their own list, or recollection, of similar songs. Here offhand are some examples of songs women would love to hate:

Women as coy, acting the opposite of what they want ("O Ang Babae:"): *"O ang babae, pag minamahal/ May kursunada, aayaw ayaw/ Pag iyong sinuyo, dadabog-dabog/ Pag iyong iniwan, hahabol-habol."* You know the rest of it. The song, coupled with movies depicting a woman furiously resisting a man's advances but eventually melting in his arms, has been a pet peeve of women's groups, with reason.

Woman as Maria Clara, from Ruben Tagalog ("Dalagang Pilipina"): *"Maging sa ugali, maging sa kumilos/ Mayumi, mahinhin/ Mabini ang lahat ng ayos/ Malinis ang puso, maging sa pag-irog/ May tibay at tining ng loob."*

A lady, defined: by Frank Sinatra ("Luck Be A Lady"). The situation is this: A man, about to gamble, begs luck to act like a lady, whose defining virtue is constancy, or faithfulness, or canine loyalty. *"A lady doesn't leave her escort/ It isn't fair/ It isn't nice/ A lady doesn't wander all over the room/ And call on some other guys' dates."*

Woman as fickle and treacherous. Alas, it waylays even the titans of jazz, such as Louis Armstrong who offers the best interpretation of this music-wise great song ("Blues in the Night"). I like his version better than Sinatra's: *"My Mama dun' tol' me/ When I was in knee pants/ My Mama dun' tol' me/ Son, a woman will sweet-talk, and give you the big eyes/ But when that sweet-talkin' is done/ A woman's a two-face/ A cursed thing that leaves you singin' the blues in the night."*

More of the same. Woman as, well, the title of this hit song in the late 1950s puts it in even more lurid terms ("Devil Woman"). An unfaithful man decides to end an affair with a "temptress": *"Mary is waiting and weeping down in our shack by the sea/ Even after I've hurt her, Mary's still in love with me/ Devil-woman it's over, I'm trapped no more by your charms/ Cause I don't want to stay, I want to get away/ Woman let go of my arms/ Oh devil woman, devil woman let go of me/ Devil woman let me be, leave me alone/ I want to go home/ Devil woman you're evil, like the dark coral reef/ Like the winds that bring high tide, you bring sorrow and grief."*

Straight from the karaoke, this (in)famous contribution from Tom Jones about the proper punishment for unfaithful women ("Delilah"): *"I saw the light on the night when I passed by your window/ I saw the flickering shadows of love on her blind/ She was my woman/ As she deceived me I watched and went out of my mind/ My my my Delilah..../ At break of day when that man drove away I was waiting/ I crossed the street to her door and she opened the door/ She stood there laughing/ I felt the knife in my hand and she laughed no more."*

Burt Bacharach, or Hal David, gives this piece of advice on how wives should hold on to their husbands in "Wives and Lovers." The musical, with that same title, was staged locally recently, if I'm not mistaken. *"Hey, little girl, comb your hair, fix your makeup/ Soon he will open the door/ Don't think because there's a ring on your finger/ You needn't try anymore/ For wives should always be lovers too/ Run to his arms whenever he comes home to you/ I'm warning you./ Day after day, there are girls in the office/ And men will always be men/ Don't send him off with your hair still in curlers/ You may not see him again...../ Hey, little girl, better wear something pretty/ Something you'd wear to go to the city/ And dim all the lights, pour the wine, start the music/ Time to get ready for love."*

The Beatles were not beyond saying pretty outrageous things about women. John Lennon, I think, got a lot of flak from "Run For Your Life," despite his defense that it was tongue-in-cheek: *"I'd rather see you dead little girl than to be with another man/ You better keep your head little girl or you won't know where I am/ You better run for your life little girl/ Hide your head in the sand little girl/ Catch you with another man/ That's the end, little girl."* George Harrison too got in hot water with women's groups with his "If I needed Someone," though he argued as well that it was meant to be satirical, even self-mocking: *"If I needed someone to love/ You're the one that I'll be thinking of/ If I needed someone.... Carve your number on my wall and maybe you will get a call from me/ If I needed someone."*

And last, at least for this quite arbitrary list, I'm sure Florante meant all this very well, ("Pinay"): *"Dapat ka bang mangibang bayan/ Dito ba'y wala kang mapaglagyan/ Tungkol sa bebot dito'y maraming okey/ Dito ang kelot ay kulang..../ At kung ikaw ay mag-aasawa/ Ang kunin mo ay Pilipina/ Pagkat magaganda ang mga Pinay/ Sa bahay man sila'y mahuhusay/ At kung umibig ay lalong okey ang Pinay."*

I don't know that women will hate that. But they sure as 21st-century Pinay won't love it.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

Clamor for 'legal,' not 'political' solution

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

I'M glad to note that Speaker Jose de Venecia has now come out with the position that there can be no "parliamentary diplomacy" unless former President Estrada agrees to place himself under the jurisdiction of the court. "Like all citizens of the republic, Mr. Estrada must have a healthy respect for the law and the judicial system," said the Speaker as he appealed to Estrada "to return to the judicial process." "We will continue to pursue and undertake parliamentary diplomacy if there is full recognition of this by Mr. Estrada," he said.

Apparently former Senate Presidents Aquilino Pimentel, Blas Ople and Edgardo Angara had earlier convinced De Venecia to spearhead the "parliamentary diplomacy," a.k.a. "back-channeling," which is regarded as a euphemism for a medical treatment-cum-exile abroad, because of their fear that Estrada's supporters will rebel against the government anew if this is not granted. It's doubtless a nervous reaction as well as a desire of the former Senate presidents to spare their old ally from the rigors of trial and possible conviction.

* * *

That there is cause for precaution may be gleaned from the account of social workers operating in Estrada's old recruiting grounds. They have told this columnist that there are indeed frantic efforts by his people to recruit for anti-government mass actions in depressed areas such as Smokey Mountain, Payatas, Dagat-Dagatan in Tondo and Navotas. Reports say the recruits are being paid P300 for "training" (for what?) but there's reportedly bigger fees for the real action. The snowballing attitude, however, is that the government cannot allow itself to be hostaged by destabilization threats and that the former Senate chiefs' political solution to the Erap problem is not the right solution. Notable among the protest reactions are the statements of various lawyers' groups defending the judicial system.

* * *

Sen. Joker Arroyo, in a recent speech before the Kilosbayan Forum titled, "The Country on Trial," decried Estrada's "belly-aching" about his "persecution" despite his comfortable hospital accommodations, his free and open access to the media and the leniency of the Sandiganbayan, as the actuations of a "spoiled brat." Lamenting recent moves to extract a political solution to the Erap problem, Arroyo argues that if the government were to allow him to leave the country under exile or medical treatment, "this would render meaningless and toothless the Plunder Law, for any public official can raid government funds and get away with it." He argued that we cannot have one standard for the President and another for lesser public officials. "Otherwise we might engender a political culture that de-sensitizes its citizens to dishonesty and lack of accountability among those who hold high public office. We will find ourselves morally disarmed."

* * *

Fr. Joaquin Bernas asserted in his column in Today that "backdoor solutions do not work when no solution, except government capitulation, is acceptable," and he cited the negotiations with the National Democratic Front that have not worked so far. Like the NDF, he noted that the Estrada forces want nothing less than "government capitulation," but if the Macapagal government should capitulate, "that would be the end." Bernas stressed that a backdoor solution cannot be reached without pressuring the judiciary. Nor should the legislature pressure the Department of Justice into easing up on enforcing the law. Unlike the former Senate presidents, two of whom are legal luminaries, Bernas sees that the problem that confronts the government "is preeminently legal" and that it must not resort to "political compromise." He added that "the fabric of government is weak enough. Another surrender to pressure will only serve to weaken it some more."

But this may be the purpose of some of those advocating a political solution: to weaken the government so that it may be easy to replace with a "friendlier" one. Citizens who love their country and want to strengthen it must see through the ploy and insist on the only workable solution—the legal solution. Finish the trial of Estrada, and yes, open it to TV, so the people can see and judge for themselves.

* * *

In the recent House hearing on the controversy on the military's role in the Lamitan incident, a nurse testified that she saw the aide of Maj. Gen. Romeo Dominguez carrying an attaché case full of money; the conclusion of some quarters out to get Dominguez is that this was bribe money he had received from the Abu Sayyaf, in exchange for letting them escape at the height of the battle in Basilan two months ago. Dominguez, defending himself, asserted that only one so unconscionably despicable could accept bribe money in exchange for the lives of his soldiers. He also stressed that indeed, his aide was carrying about P66,000, but this was a military fund to answer for any emergency needs of the soldiers, such as hospitalization.

Dominguez's assertion was shot down by some legislators who opined that the military units usually transact financial needs through the banks. This argument, however, reveals that the critics do not know the reality on the ground. Military commanders, indeed, have to carry substantial cash when visiting the troops, for there are no banks in the boondocks and sometimes they have to wade right through a raging battle—no time to look for banks. In Lamitan, as far as I can tell, there's only the UCPB. I don't mind repeating here what my husband says about Dominguez, who served as a member of the promotions board that he chaired years ago: "Dominguez is a most decent officer and I cannot believe the yarn being propagated about him."

Not-so-balanced news

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

THE PHILIPPINE press is reputed to be the freest in this part of the world. Unlike most of our neighboring countries, we do not have laws that allow the detention of reporters and the closure of newspapers on the mere say-so of the authorities that they constitute a threat to the peace and order of the community.

So free is our press that anything and everything can be published in the newspapers, with only the conscience of the writer and libel laws acting as restraints on possible excesses.

A reader, Jesus Villamor, has expressed his dismay with the present state of our press. He observed that "one problem I find with the Philippine press is that an 'allegation' by one person can be printed on the front page where everyone can see it but a rebuttal or an explanation of the issue is printed on the Letters to the Editor page, one of the inside pages of the newspaper.

"Also, I find it disconcerting that an 'allegation' is treated as if it is already a 'fact' rather than an unsubstantiated item. Whatever happened to 'balanced news and fearless views?'

"The exact opposite of a man being not guilty unless proven otherwise is the prevailing sentiment in the Philippines and I believe the media have a lot to do with this. What a shame!"

Unfair treatment

Although the letter is directed to the Philippine press in general, it is apparent that it is primarily addressed to the INQUIRER.

The reader's complaint about the treatment of allegations is not new to the editors. They are aware of it.

Admittedly, there have been occasions when reports that put people in a bad light are given prominent treatment but clarifications or corrections are relegated to the inside pages.

This "unequal treatment," the editors say, is not deliberate or a matter of editorial policy. The staff observes a provision in the Manual of Editorial Policies of the newspaper that states that when a report contains something derogatory to a person, the side of that person should be immediately sought and published together with the main news.

But sometimes getting the other side is not easy. The subject of the news often asks for time to prepare his answer, or wants to clear things up first with his lawyer, or simply refuses to say anything. Faced with a deadline from the news desk, the reporter has no choice but to report the story without including the explanation of the other party.

If the news is still fresh or current, the side of the other party is published in the follow-up stories on the succeeding days on the same page where the news first appeared. That treatment, however, is not feasible if the news is overtaken by other equally or more significant news.

To illustrate, in the middle of August last year, the front pages of the INQUIRER were dominated by the Senate investigation of the alleged illegal bank accounts of Sen. Panfilo Lacson. The accusations and counteraccusations of the protagonists in that controversy were given prominent treatment as they were dished out.

Then, the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States happened. Because of the serious implications of that event to the Philippines and to the world in general, the INQUIRER had to push aside its reports on the investigation in favor of a detailed coverage of the terrorist attacks.

It was only after three weeks that the local news reports regained their place on the front page of the newspaper. And even then, feeds from international news agencies about the retaliatory actions of the US government were published as part of the continuing story of the Sept. 11 event.

When presenting the other side of the story with equal prominence poses a problem because of breaking news, the next best thing that the newspaper can do is either include it in any related story that may come out later or publish the letter of the affected party in the Letters page.

Allegation

With regard to the concern expressed by the reader that the INQUIRER treats "allegations" as "facts" rather than unsubstantiated items, the editorial staff explained that the newspaper merely reports the statements of news sources as they are made and do not represent them to be true or correct.

To avoid misquotes or inaccurate information, the reporters are under strict instructions to either record the statements on tape or in their notepads. When the side of the other party is published together with the allegations made, the readers can make an informed judgment on who is telling the truth and who is not.

The evaluation or appreciation of allegations made and published is the domain of the Opinion section. It is in that section, which is not considered a part of the news section, where the allegations are dissected for their intrinsic value and praised for their credibility or relevance, or dismissed as mere ranting of a publicity hound.

Evaluation

I agree with the reader that an "allegation" and a "rebuttal" should be accorded equal treatment. Fair play dictates that charges and countercharges, or accusations and defenses, should appear together so the reader gets to know all the sides of an issue.

Also, there is no parity between the front page and the Letters page in terms of catching the reader's attention. The front page gets premium eye contact because it is the first thing a reader sees when he receives the newspaper. After the front page, reading the rest of the newspaper is a question of preference or availability of time.

At the same time, however, I recognize that the newsroom does not have control over the events happening in the country or elsewhere in the world as to enable it to "reserve" the front page for everything that a party affected by a news report wants to say or be read by the public.

But this should not be taken to mean that the newspaper is excused from taking all necessary efforts to give equal treatment to its news subjects, especially if reputations are involved. That should be the rule, rather than the exception.

The participation of the readers in this undertaking is most welcome. They can call the newspaper's attention if they spot lapses in fair news treatment so the proper remedial measures can be taken to ensure that the slogan "balanced news and fearless views" is not reduced to a mere play of words.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

3 phrases that perpetuate division

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Datu Amir Baraguir

DEAN Jorge Bocobo's article on ecumenism (PDI, 2/11/02) deserves a serious look. He identifies the "root causes" of the violence in Mindanao as the "unbroken, unconstitutional religious discrimination and cultural segregation, condoned and perpetuated by every government since 1946" which, he says, "gives minorities every reason to prefer secession or independence, and to fight for them."

What compounds these root causes is the penchant of officials to adopt the rhetoric in vogue in order to advance their careers by way of pandering to these minorities (read *pa-pogi*).

Three of the fads that captured the whims of policymakers and lobbyists in or for Mindanao are phrases that either introduce or perpetuate divisiveness: Bangsamoro, tri-people and Islamic state.

"Moro" is, as Dr. Thomas McKenna wrote in a number of books and articles, a colonial construct that lumps together all the ethnic groups in Mindanao that profess Islam as a religion. It was adopted by Nur Misuari and other wayward youth in the late '60s to rally a constituency that they could hardly handle. Both the government bureaucracy and the Muslim masses who otherwise possess legitimate grievances against the government adopted the dubious nomenclature and ultimately found its way into our laws, media and popular consciousness. Far from helping in addressing the real issues, it has further complicated the conceptual framework of the so-called "Mindanao Problem." The pseudo-national identity has even been successful in finding its way through international documents. It takes a lot of effort from all sectors to undo the damage that has been done by the term "Bangsamoro" (Moro nation).

"Tri-people" is the term initially used by leftists to describe the people of Mindanao and Sulu. According to them, there are three peoples whose rights must be addressed: Moros, Christians and lumads. Moros, they assert, are the indigenous peoples professing Islam; Christians are settlers from Luzon and the Visayas who gained residence through legitimate means; lumads are the non-Muslim indigenous peoples. Adopted by some bureaucrats, this concept tends to discriminate against the Chinese and other foreign settlers who acquired Filipino citizenship and contribute positively to the local economy and other sectors not falling under any of these artificial divisions.

"Islamic state" is also a concept that has been espoused by creative Muslim ideologues and activists worldwide without any concrete basis. Applied locally, it has fuelled the rhetoric of politicians, religious leaders and brigands who are prepared to use the best of human ideals as a cloak for the worst of human impulses.

Bocobo's challenge to Church leaders should be heeded by government policymakers, too. Ecumenism in religion should be coupled with forethought in government so that real issues and problems will be solved rather than complicated further.

There are exceptions, of course. The government can always exercise prudence in specific cases to avert confessional grievances. A case in point is the recent problem involving Muslim pilgrims.

Relatives of Muslim pilgrims who could have otherwise failed to perform their religious duties are thankful that officials of the Macapagal administration quickly found a remedy. My informants attribute the successful completion of the stranded Filipino hajjis' trip to the Muslim Holy Land to the coordination made by Administrator Datu Zamzamin Ampatuan of the Southern Philippines Development Administration with senior defense officials.

Ampatuan, a former executive director of the Office on Muslim Affairs, was informed by former OMA subordinates that their office is in a quandary over the plight of Filipino pilgrims who were stranded in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Setting aside protocol, Ampatuan instructed the erstwhile staffer to seek help from Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and Air Force Chief Gen. Benjamin Defensor who readily sent the "mercy flights" which took the beleaguered pilgrims to Jeddah. Had this been not done, Muslim jingoists would have found ammunition for their seditious guns to blame the government for the failure of members of the flock to accomplish their ritual obligations.

* * *

In my article last month titled "The Maguindanao nation's love affair with Uncle Sam," the word "Maguindanaon" was consistently changed into "Maguindanaoan" by the INQUIRER editor. As a result, I received some criticism from fellow Maguindanaons. I apologize.

* * *

Comments to datuamir@hotmail.com

Forest primeval

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

"THIS is the forest primeval, the murmuring pines and the hemlocks. Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight, stand like Druids of old, with voices sad and prophetic, stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms. Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighboring ocean speaks and in accents disconsolate, answers the wail of the forest."

In the weeks prior to a recent trek to Mount Pulag National Park, I had actually come to memorize these first, very few lines from Longfellow's long prose poem, "Evangeline." Although he was writing a story set in the Arcadian forests of North America, no one who has trekked through the Mount Pulag National Park here in the Philippines, can fail to be moved by the poet's creation of an uncanny resemblance between them. At the higher, wilder elevations of the park, the mundane pine forests of the Philippine Cordilleras, so taken for granted by jaded Baguio tourists, give way to a rarer, mossy oak forest, where the greens are deeper and more varied, invaded by a chiaroscuro palette of purples and cranberry and brown, and the trees and the strange ferns, take on a denser, prophetic aspect.

Or mute witness to a tragedy, I thought, as we set off from our starting point in the small village of Tawangan, itself, lost in the time and space of Mount Pulag's northern lowlands. We had spent the previous night in the humble but ample abode of our guide and his family (where I discovered my expensive imported hiking boots had irreparable damage and exchanged them for an old pair of rubber galoshes, with some trepidation). But fortified by their warm hospitality, we were now headed for the village of Lusod, where no road leads but what the feet can tread on, and in the very shadow of the mighty mountain. Its peak was our target. At 2,929 meters above sea level (nearly three kilometers up in the air) it is the precise point on the island of Luzon that is nearest to heaven. Maybe that is why the local Kalanguya and Ibaloi folk who live all around the mountain, in its hidden gorges and aeries lost in the deep woodlands, believe Mount Pulag to be the physical location of heaven.

My trekking partner, who was a champion rally car navigator and once voted the country's best, was interrogating our bemused guide about times and distances to various stations along our way on this crossing of the high mountain country north and east of Mount Pulag's peak (which also marks the point where the three provinces of Ifugao, Benguet and Nueva Vizcaya meet).

With a brand-new global positioning system (GPS), he had much the better than our guide and we usually leave the driving to him, so to speak. But of course, I followed the guide's unerring footsteps through the unrelenting and unpredictable trail. He was our human compass. Still, it was really cool at rest stops to look at an electronic plot of the just-traversed trail, with its amazingly steep assaults and free-fall descents into hitherto unvisited valleys, resplendent in meadows of wildflowers, all courtesy of a modern GPS and its cohort of satellites in the sky.

We made Lusod in under eight hours of a hard hike, hidden in the eastern lee of Mount Pulag. Taking advice to stay at the Multipurpose facility, we found it to be well-maintained, safe from rampaging nocturnal wild pigs and adorned with a framed quotation from the Red Book of Chairman Mao Tsetung (when his name was still spelt like that): "Let a thousand flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend." Great, I thought, this must be a liberated area of the NPA. It had to be. The local "store" had nothing for sale but sardines, period. But that is to be expected, since a typical "housewife" in these parts must hike five to six hours to do "groceries," then come back with them before dark. We were fast asleep and dreaming of the next day's hike straight up the eastern slope of Mount Pulag, before the stars above went to work.

That hike would prove to be the most memorable for me of all my visits to this premier wilderness area of the Philippines. We progressed from the riverine valley near Lusod up through the Benguet pine forest, and through a vast and gorgeous stretch of the mossy oak forest, before finally emerging at the alpine grasslands of the mountain's summit area. These "grasslands" are actually a kind of bonsai bamboo, lambent and soft and glorious to pitch a tent on, to crawl into at the end of a long and arduous trek. The whole area is a treasure trove of natural wonders, botanic and zoological.

Now, here it may seem like the forest primeval, with its lush foliage and labyrinthine woodlands, where it is starkly beautiful even on that cold, forlorn summit. But what actually remains is but a shadow of past glory, unimaginably grander and probably unrecoverable. For before this was a national park, it was all logging and mining country, part of the El Dorado for which the Parity Amendment was imposed. It was that rape and pillage that perhaps accounts for the mournful aspect of this deep and verdant forest, a memory now "indistinct in the twilight."

Looking down on the far clouds from Mount Pulag's peaks, with one's skin and hair still redolent from the musks and smells of the forest, there is only a sense of awe, intensified as darkness falls and a billion stars come out to greet the tired but thankful eye. And oh yes, those Igorots know something, I'll always wear these two hundred-peso rubber boots on these journeys.

* * *

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Clamor for 'legal,' not 'political' solution

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

I'M glad to note that Speaker Jose de Venecia has now come out with the position that there can be no "parliamentary diplomacy" unless former President Estrada agrees to place himself under the jurisdiction of the court. "Like all citizens of the republic, Mr. Estrada must have a healthy respect for the law and the judicial system," said the Speaker as he appealed to Estrada "to return to the judicial process." "We will continue to pursue and undertake parliamentary diplomacy if there is full recognition of this by Mr. Estrada," he said.

Apparently former Senate Presidents Aquilino Pimentel, Blas Ople and Edgardo Angara had earlier convinced De Venecia to spearhead the "parliamentary diplomacy," a.k.a. "back-channeling," which is regarded as a euphemism for a medical treatment-cum-exile abroad, because of their fear that Estrada's supporters will rebel against the government anew if this is not granted. It's doubtless a nervous reaction as well as a desire of the former Senate presidents to spare their old ally from the rigors of trial and possible conviction.

* * *

That there is cause for precaution may be gleaned from the account of social workers operating in Estrada's old recruiting grounds. They have told this columnist that there are indeed frantic efforts by his people to recruit for anti-government mass actions in depressed areas such as Smokey Mountain, Payatas, Dagat-Dagatan in Tondo and Navotas. Reports say the recruits are being paid P300 for "training" (for what?) but there's reportedly bigger fees for the real action. The snowballing attitude, however, is that the government cannot allow itself to be hostaged by destabilization threats and that the former Senate chiefs' political solution to the Erap problem is not the right solution. Notable among the protest reactions are the statements of various lawyers' groups defending the judicial system.

* * *

Sen. Joker Arroyo, in a recent speech before the Kilosbayan Forum titled, "The Country on Trial," decried Estrada's "belly-aching" about his "persecution" despite his comfortable hospital accommodations, his free and open access to the media and the leniency of the Sandiganbayan, as the actuations of a "spoiled brat." Lamenting recent moves to extract a political solution to the Erap problem, Arroyo argues that if the government were to allow him to leave the country under exile or medical treatment, "this would render meaningless and toothless the Plunder Law, for any public official can raid government funds and get away with it." He argued that we cannot have one standard for the President and another for lesser public officials. "Otherwise we might engender a political culture that de-sensitizes its citizens to dishonesty and lack of accountability among those who hold high public office. We will find ourselves morally disarmed."

* * *

Fr. Joaquin Bernas asserted in his column in Today that "backdoor solutions do not work when no solution, except government capitulation, is acceptable," and he cited the negotiations with the National Democratic Front that have not worked so far. Like the NDF, he noted that the Estrada forces want nothing less than "government capitulation," but if the Macapagal government should capitulate, "that would be the end." Bernas stressed that a backdoor solution cannot be reached without pressuring the judiciary. Nor should the legislature pressure the Department of Justice into easing up on enforcing the law. Unlike the former Senate presidents, two of whom are legal luminaries, Bernas sees that the problem that confronts the government "is preeminently legal" and that it must not resort to "political compromise." He added that "the fabric of government is weak enough. Another surrender to pressure will only serve to weaken it some more."

But this may be the purpose of some of those advocating a political solution: to weaken the government so that it may be easy to replace with a "friendlier" one. Citizens who love their country and want to strengthen it must see through the ploy and insist on the only workable solution—the legal solution. Finish the trial of Estrada, and yes, open it to TV, so the people can see and judge for themselves.

* * *

In the recent House hearing on the controversy on the military's role in the Lamitan incident, a nurse testified that she saw the aide of Maj. Gen. Romeo Dominguez carrying an attaché case full of money; the conclusion of some quarters out to get Dominguez is that this was bribe money he had received from the Abu Sayyaf, in exchange for letting them escape at the height of the battle in Basilan two months ago. Dominguez, defending himself, asserted that only one so unconscionably despicable could accept bribe money in exchange for the lives of his soldiers. He also stressed that indeed, his aide was carrying about P66,000, but this was a military fund to answer for any emergency needs of the soldiers, such as hospitalization.

Dominguez's assertion was shot down by some legislators who opined that the military units usually transact financial needs through the banks. This argument, however, reveals that the critics do not know the reality on the ground. Military commanders, indeed, have to carry substantial cash when visiting the troops, for there are no banks in the boondocks and sometimes they have to wade right through a raging battle—no time to look for banks. In Lamitan, as far as I can tell, there's only the UCPB. I don't mind repeating here what my husband says about Dominguez, who served as a member of the promotions board that he chaired years ago: "Dominguez is a most decent officer and I cannot believe the yarn being propagated about him."

Not-so-balanced news

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

THE PHILIPPINE press is reputed to be the freest in this part of the world. Unlike most of our neighboring countries, we do not have laws that allow the detention of reporters and the closure of newspapers on the mere say-so of the authorities that they constitute a threat to the peace and order of the community.

So free is our press that anything and everything can be published in the newspapers, with only the conscience of the writer and libel laws acting as restraints on possible excesses.

A reader, Jesus Villamor, has expressed his dismay with the present state of our press. He observed that "one problem I find with the Philippine press is that an 'allegation' by one person can be printed on the front page where everyone can see it but a rebuttal or an explanation of the issue is printed on the Letters to the Editor page, one of the inside pages of the newspaper.

"Also, I find it disconcerting that an 'allegation' is treated as if it is already a 'fact' rather than an unsubstantiated item. Whatever happened to 'balanced news and fearless views?'

"The exact opposite of a man being not guilty unless proven otherwise is the prevailing sentiment in the Philippines and I believe the media have a lot to do with this. What a shame!"

Unfair treatment

Although the letter is directed to the Philippine press in general, it is apparent that it is primarily addressed to the INQUIRER.

The reader's complaint about the treatment of allegations is not new to the editors. They are aware of it.

Admittedly, there have been occasions when reports that put people in a bad light are given prominent treatment but clarifications or corrections are relegated to the inside pages.

This "unequal treatment," the editors say, is not deliberate or a matter of editorial policy. The staff observes a provision in the Manual of Editorial Policies of the newspaper that states that when a report contains something derogatory to a person, the side of that person should be immediately sought and published together with the main news.

But sometimes getting the other side is not easy. The subject of the news often asks for time to prepare his answer, or wants to clear things up first with his lawyer, or simply refuses to say anything. Faced with a deadline from the news desk, the reporter has no choice but to report the story without including the explanation of the other party.

If the news is still fresh or current, the side of the other party is published in the follow-up stories on the succeeding days on the same page where the news first appeared. That treatment, however, is not feasible if the news is overtaken by other equally or more significant news.

To illustrate, in the middle of August last year, the front pages of the INQUIRER were dominated by the Senate investigation of the alleged illegal bank accounts of Sen. Panfilo Lacson. The accusations and counteraccusations of the protagonists in that controversy were given prominent treatment as they were dished out.

Then, the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States happened. Because of the serious implications of that event to the Philippines and to the world in general, the INQUIRER had to push aside its reports on the investigation in favor of a detailed coverage of the terrorist attacks.

It was only after three weeks that the local news reports regained their place on the front page of the newspaper. And even then, feeds from international news agencies about the retaliatory actions of the US government were published as part of the continuing story of the Sept. 11 event.

When presenting the other side of the story with equal prominence poses a problem because of breaking news, the next best thing that the newspaper can do is either include it in any related story that may come out later or publish the letter of the affected party in the Letters page.

Allegation

With regard to the concern expressed by the reader that the INQUIRER treats "allegations" as "facts" rather than unsubstantiated items, the editorial staff explained that the newspaper merely reports the statements of news sources as they are made and do not represent them to be true or correct.

To avoid misquotes or inaccurate information, the reporters are under strict instructions to either record the statements on tape or in their notepads. When the side of the other party is published together with the allegations made, the readers can make an informed judgment on who is telling the truth and who is not.

The evaluation or appreciation of allegations made and published is the domain of the Opinion section. It is in that section, which is not considered a part of the news section, where the allegations are dissected for their intrinsic value and praised for their credibility or relevance, or dismissed as mere ranting of a publicity hound.

Evaluation

I agree with the reader that an "allegation" and a "rebuttal" should be accorded equal treatment. Fair play dictates that charges and countercharges, or accusations and defenses, should appear together so the reader gets to know all the sides of an issue.

Also, there is no parity between the front page and the Letters page in terms of catching the reader's attention. The front page gets premium eye contact because it is the first thing a reader sees when he receives the newspaper. After the front page, reading the rest of the newspaper is a question of preference or availability of time.

At the same time, however, I recognize that the newsroom does not have control over the events happening in the country or elsewhere in the world as to enable it to "reserve" the front page for everything that a party affected by a news report wants to say or be read by the public.

But this should not be taken to mean that the newspaper is excused from taking all necessary efforts to give equal treatment to its news subjects, especially if reputations are involved. That should be the rule, rather than the exception.

The participation of the readers in this undertaking is most welcome. They can call the newspaper's attention if they spot lapses in fair news treatment so the proper remedial measures can be taken to ensure that the slogan "balanced news and fearless views" is not reduced to a mere play of words.

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

3 phrases that perpetuate division

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Datu Amir Baraguir

DEAN Jorge Bocobo's article on ecumenism (PDI, 2/11/02) deserves a serious look. He identifies the "root causes" of the violence in Mindanao as the "unbroken, unconstitutional religious discrimination and cultural segregation, condoned and perpetuated by every government since 1946" which, he says, "gives minorities every reason to prefer secession or independence, and to fight for them."

What compounds these root causes is the penchant of officials to adopt the rhetoric in vogue in order to advance their careers by way of pandering to these minorities (read *pa-pogi*).

Three of the fads that captured the whims of policymakers and lobbyists in or for Mindanao are phrases that either introduce or perpetuate divisiveness: Bangsamoro, tri-people and Islamic state.

"Moro" is, as Dr. Thomas McKenna wrote in a number of books and articles, a colonial construct that lumps together all the ethnic groups in Mindanao that profess Islam as a religion. It was adopted by Nur Misuari and other wayward youth in the late '60s to rally a constituency that they could hardly handle. Both the government bureaucracy and the Muslim masses who otherwise possess legitimate grievances against the government adopted the dubious nomenclature and ultimately found its way into our laws, media and popular consciousness. Far from helping in addressing the real issues, it has further complicated the conceptual framework of the so-called "Mindanao Problem." The pseudo-national identity has even been successful in finding its way through international documents. It takes a lot of effort from all sectors to undo the damage that has been done by the term "Bangsamoro" (Moro nation).

"Tri-people" is the term initially used by leftists to describe the people of Mindanao and Sulu. According to them, there are three peoples whose rights must be addressed: Moros, Christians and lumads. Moros, they assert, are the indigenous peoples professing Islam; Christians are settlers from Luzon and the Visayas who gained residence through legitimate means; lumads are the non-Muslim indigenous peoples. Adopted by some bureaucrats, this concept tends to discriminate against the Chinese and other foreign settlers who acquired Filipino citizenship and contribute positively to the local economy and other sectors not falling under any of these artificial divisions.

"Islamic state" is also a concept that has been espoused by creative Muslim ideologues and activists worldwide without any concrete basis. Applied locally, it has fuelled the rhetoric of politicians, religious leaders and brigands who are prepared to use the best of human ideals as a cloak for the worst of human impulses.

Bocobo's challenge to Church leaders should be heeded by government policymakers, too. Ecumenism in religion should be coupled with forethought in government so that real issues and problems will be solved rather than complicated further.

There are exceptions, of course. The government can always exercise prudence in specific cases to avert confessional grievances. A case in point is the recent problem involving Muslim pilgrims.

Relatives of Muslim pilgrims who could have otherwise failed to perform their religious duties are thankful that officials of the Macapagal administration quickly found a remedy. My informants attribute the successful completion of the stranded Filipino hajjis' trip to the Muslim Holy Land to the coordination made by Administrator Datu Zamzamin Ampatuan of the Southern Philippines Development Administration with senior defense officials.

Ampatuan, a former executive director of the Office on Muslim Affairs, was informed by former OMA subordinates that their office is in a quandary over the plight of Filipino pilgrims who were stranded in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Setting aside protocol, Ampatuan instructed the erstwhile staffer to seek help from Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes and Air Force Chief Gen. Benjamin Defensor who readily sent the "mercy flights" which took the beleaguered pilgrims to Jeddah. Had this been not done, Muslim jingoists would have found ammunition for their seditious guns to blame the government for the failure of members of the flock to accomplish their ritual obligations.

* * *

In my article last month titled "The Maguindanao nation's love affair with Uncle Sam," the word "Maguindanaon" was consistently changed into "Maguindanaoan" by the INQUIRER editor. As a result, I received some criticism from fellow Maguindanaons. I apologize.

* * *

Comments to datuamir@hotmail.com

Forest primeval

COMMENTARY

Dean Jorge Bocobo

"THIS is the forest primeval, the murmuring pines and the hemlocks. Bearded with moss, and in garments green, indistinct in the twilight, stand like Druids of old, with voices sad and prophetic, stand like harpers hoar, with beards that rest on their bosoms. Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced neighboring ocean speaks and in accents disconsolate, answers the wail of the forest."

In the weeks prior to a recent trek to Mount Pulag National Park, I had actually come to memorize these first, very few lines from Longfellow's long prose poem, "Evangeline." Although he was writing a story set in the Arcadian forests of North America, no one who has trekked through the Mount Pulag National Park here in the Philippines, can fail to be moved by the poet's creation of an uncanny resemblance between them. At the higher, wilder elevations of the park, the mundane pine forests of the Philippine Cordilleras, so taken for granted by jaded Baguio tourists, give way to a rarer, mossy oak forest, where the greens are deeper and more varied, invaded by a chiaroscuro palette of purples and cranberry and brown, and the trees and the strange ferns, take on a denser, prophetic aspect.

Or mute witness to a tragedy, I thought, as we set off from our starting point in the small village of Tawangan, itself, lost in the time and space of Mount Pulag's northern lowlands. We had spent the previous night in the humble but ample abode of our guide and his family (where I discovered my expensive imported hiking boots had irreparable damage and exchanged them for an old pair of rubber galoshes, with some trepidation). But fortified by their warm hospitality, we were now headed for the village of Lusod, where no road leads but what the feet can tread on, and in the very shadow of the mighty mountain. Its peak was our target. At 2,929 meters above sea level (nearly three kilometers up in the air) it is the precise point on the island of Luzon that is nearest to heaven. Maybe that is why the local Kalanguya and Ibaloi folk who live all around the mountain, in its hidden gorges and aeries lost in the deep woodlands, believe Mount Pulag to be the physical location of heaven.

My trekking partner, who was a champion rally car navigator and once voted the country's best, was interrogating our bemused guide about times and distances to various stations along our way on this crossing of the high mountain country north and east of Mount Pulag's peak (which also marks the point where the three provinces of Ifugao, Benguet and Nueva Vizcaya meet).

With a brand-new global positioning system (GPS), he had much the better than our guide and we usually leave the driving to him, so to speak. But of course, I followed the guide's unerring footsteps through the unrelenting and unpredictable trail. He was our human compass. Still, it was really cool at rest stops to look at an electronic plot of the just-traversed trail, with its amazingly steep assaults and free-fall descents into hitherto unvisited valleys, resplendent in meadows of wildflowers, all courtesy of a modern GPS and its cohort of satellites in the sky.

We made Lusod in under eight hours of a hard hike, hidden in the eastern lee of Mount Pulag. Taking advice to stay at the Multipurpose facility, we found it to be well-maintained, safe from rampaging nocturnal wild pigs and adorned with a framed quotation from the Red Book of Chairman Mao Tsetung (when his name was still spelt like that): "Let a thousand flowers bloom and a hundred schools of thought contend." Great, I thought, this must be a liberated area of the NPA. It had to be. The local "store" had nothing for sale but sardines, period. But that is to be expected, since a typical "housewife" in these parts must hike five to six hours to do "groceries," then come back with them before dark. We were fast asleep and dreaming of the next day's hike straight up the eastern slope of Mount Pulag, before the stars above went to work.

That hike would prove to be the most memorable for me of all my visits to this premier wilderness area of the Philippines. We progressed from the riverine valley near Lusod up through the Benguet pine forest, and through a vast and gorgeous stretch of the mossy oak forest, before finally emerging at the alpine grasslands of the mountain's summit area. These "grasslands" are actually a kind of bonsai bamboo, lambent and soft and glorious to pitch a tent on, to crawl into at the end of a long and arduous trek. The whole area is a treasure trove of natural wonders, botanic and zoological.

Now, here it may seem like the forest primeval, with its lush foliage and labyrinthine woodlands, where it is starkly beautiful even on that cold, forlorn summit. But what actually remains is but a shadow of past glory, unimaginably grander and probably unrecoverable. For before this was a national park, it was all logging and mining country, part of the El Dorado for which the Parity Amendment was imposed. It was that rape and pillage that perhaps accounts for the mournful aspect of this deep and verdant forest, a memory now "indistinct in the twilight."

Looking down on the far clouds from Mount Pulag's peaks, with one's skin and hair still redolent from the musks and smells of the forest, there is only a sense of awe, intensified as darkness falls and a billion stars come out to greet the tired but thankful eye. And oh yes, those Igorots know something, I'll always wear these two hundred-peso rubber boots on these journeys.

* * *

Comments to deanjbocobo@yahoo.com

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Population explosion or extinction?

IS the population scare, so vigorously marketed by population controllers for decades up to now, still one of overpopulation, or is it now of depopulation? Will there be population explosion, or will there be extinction instead?

The question has to be asked in the light of disturbing reports by the United Nations saying that the world population today is suffering from aging.

As UN data have it, the world's population is aging rapidly with the percentage of people over 60 expected to double in the next 50 years.

The older population is itself aging, and currently the oldest of the old—the group 80 or older—is the fastest growing of the elderly, making up to 12 percent of those over 60.

It is also said that the number celebrating their 100th birthdays will be 15 times higher at mid-century than today.

More specifically, it is said that while today one in 10 people in the global population of 6.1 billion is 60 or older, in 2050 it is projected to be one in five, and by 2150, one in three.

In 2050, the number of people over 60 will outnumber children, defined as those up to 14 years of age. This means that right now the trend is to have more old people than young people. That is, there are less and less childbirths!

These are terrifying figures indeed! The implications, the UN officials say, are profound with an impact on economic growth, savings, labor markets and pensions.

In other words, economic growth will be hindered, savings will diminish, the labor market will be depleted and pensions will increase, straining the economy to the breaking point.

Why? Simply because that situation can only mean that there are more and more people to be supported, while there will be fewer people who can work and support others.

As for causes, the UN officials point to "declining fertility, declining mortality and people living longer."

I believe that that is a bland way of explaining things. First of all, it should be said that this development is cause for grave concern. The UN report seems to downplay this.

We can only speculate that the reason could be to avoid admitting, at least for now, the mistake of undertaking that stupid population control policy that was based simply or basically on numbers.

There might have been efforts to soften that attitude, like talking about women's rights over their body, reproductive health, better welfare for everyone, etc., but in the end, the population issue was mainly seen as a numbers game. People have been reduced to numbers.

There were quotas to be reached, for example, in the use of condoms, IUDs and in the recourse to ligation and other forms of sterilization and contraception.

There were strong pressures on several countries to lower their population growth rate. No matter how much they tried to soften and humanize their programs, it cannot be denied that they were very interested in attaining what to them is supposed to be the ideal population level.

Largely, if not totally ignored, are the cultural and religious considerations that definitely need to be given due importance whenever the population issue is tackled.

Also ignored is the fact that there is such a thing as population replacement level, below which a country could not replenish, and worse, could not go back. It will simply go down the slippery slope to extinction, without any hope to arrest, much less, reverse it.

Once the contraceptive mentality sets in, when it becomes part of a people's culture, it will be difficult to undo it. It simply heads toward the point of no return.

—FR. ROY CIMAGALA, chaplain, Center for Industrial Technology and Enterprise (CITE), Talamban, Cebu City

LETTERS TO THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Inhumane way of killing dogs

I WOULD like to make a clarification on the story "Rabies unleashes deadly fangs in Davao." (PDI, 4/12/02) This was about killing dogs by putting them in "gas chambers" as a way of exterminating them mercifully.

Although I understand that due to lack of funds, some dog pounds have no choice but to resort to gas chambers to avoid overpopulation. But being gassed to death, however, is in no way humane. The only humane way I know in "killing" animals is putting them to sleep using the drug Euthal.

After reading the article, I called Philippine Animal Welfare Society president Nita Lichauco to ask if indeed gas chambers for dogs are allowed by Republic Act 8485 otherwise known as the Animal Welfare Act. She said that gas chambers are merely tolerated. But the chamber must have a small window so that a licensed practicing veterinarian can watch to make sure the dogs are not suffering and are later examined to make sure they are dead. The use of a filter to refine the gas is also recommended. She will ask that the administrative order regarding euthanasia strictly include the required "tranquilization by injection" on dogs before they are put in the gas chamber.

This is just a clarification and in no way argues with any city ordinance. In this matter, the public must get as much information as possible. We urge the government to improve the conditions in dog pounds in the Philippines, and strongly implement the Animal Welfare Act.

I would also appeal to owners of animals (not just dogs and cats) that if the city or town where they live offers free vaccines, especially anti-rabies shots, to avail themselves of these for their pets' sake. But they should check the bottles to see that the vaccines are not expired and make sure that the syringes used on their pets are new ones and not used repeatedly on other pets. Pets can contract diseases by sharing syringes just like humans.

—MARLET D. SALAZAR, readmypet@yahoo.com

Only Jancom qualified to bid for San Mateo waste program

I WOULD like to take exception to the opinions of Solita Monsod (PDI, 2/23/02) and Neal Cruz (PDI, 2/28/02). Both stated that the whole bidding process for the San Mateo Rizal Waste Management Project was "rigged" from the start. They alleged that the committee I belonged to arranged for Jancom Environmental Corp. to be the only bidder for the project, while the other two bidders would bid for another project in Carmona.

The government created an executive committee, of which I was a co-chair, for the implementation of a waste-to-energy project in two sites: San Mateo, Rizal and Carmona, Cavite. That there were two project sites is very relevant.

On Jan. 21, 1995, the project was advertised in accordance with the BOT law. Each of the 11 original proponents signified which site they would develop at the outset. Since most of them did not comply with the requirements of the BOT law, they were even given a second chance to submit additional documents on June 16, 1995.

Of the11 amended proposals, only three passed the requirements of the prequalification, bids and awards committee. Of the three, only Jancom signified its intention to finance the San Mateo project site at the outset. The two other proponents were interested only in the Carmona site. Jancom could not be asked to finance the other project site, nor could the proponents interested in the Carmona project site be made to develop the San Mateo site as well. The cost of financing two sites would be staggering and beyond the capabilities of any of the proponents. What the executive committee did was merely to confirm and endorse the intention of the project proponents themselves.

Assuming that Jancom was the only proponent interested in the San Mateo project, it did not mean that it would be awarded the contract to develop the site. It only meant that the executive committee would negotiate with Jancom, without waiving any of the requirements of the BOT law. In fact, we required Jancom to post a bid bond of P76.44 million before it could submit its proposal for study and evaluation. After that, the proposal went under strict evaluation from 1995 up to December 1997 to ensure that the requirements of the project are met.

—DIONISIO C. DE LA SERNA, Unit 1402, Platinum 2000, Annapolis St., Greenhills, San Juan, Metro Manila

Estrada exile is an abdication of responsibility to the nation

WE in the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines strongly oppose any move to send former President Joseph Estrada into exile.

Estrada must stay in the country and face the charge of plunder. If the government does not pursue his trial, if it lets him go into exile without answering for the crimes he has been accused of, it will be abdicating its responsibility to its citizens to uphold justice at all times, no matter the cost. Estrada's exile, we believe, will lead to a total breakdown of the judicial system.

Our country has had a long history of sweeping offenses and transgressions under the rug. We have been sending the wrong signal and giving the wrong impression to our people, children and to other nations: that in the Philippines, crime does pay, and Filipinos forget easily.

It's time to change the course of history. We have held our country hostage to injustice far too long. Why should we abandon the justice system for one man? What kind of government will we have if we do this? What does it say about us as a people if we find it so easy to let criminals walk?

We speak about the promotion of justice in our Constitution, but we only talk the talk, we don't walk the walk.

The Estrada trial presents us with a unique challenge. We are being called to do the right thing, to make amends for all the wrong things we've ever done in our country. Let us not back down from this challenge. Let us not shirk our responsibility to fight for justice, and this time to win, at least one battle.

Certain people who call themselves leaders have raised the fear of an uprising by Estrada's supporters to justify the call for his exile. We tell them: that bogey is the least you should be afraid of.

You let Estrada walk, and you might as well join him in exile; because the streets would once again fill up with people. And this time, they won't forget.

—ERNESTO F. HERRERA, secretary general, Trade Union Congress of the Philippines

Market prices too high in La Pacita

THE PACITA Complex in San Pedro, Laguna is a sprawling residential subdivision of class A, B and some C people. It is an ideal place to live in. Good schools, big commercial centers and big and fair-priced municipal markets in San Pedro and Biñan are near and easily accessible.

It also has a small commercial center which is a convenient stop. However, its market section sells goods that are overpriced compared to the municipal markets in San Pedro and Biñan. Pork sells at P130 per kilo. Even *galunggong* sells at P90 a kilo. The overpricing also goes for beef, chicken and other kinds of fish. A kilo of onion is P90—too much for the convenience and proximity of the commercial center.

The municipal officials of San Pedro seem to be sleeping on the job or are simply indifferent since some of the stall owners are supposed to be municipal employees of San Pedro, Laguna themselves.

Who can we turn to? Mayor Felicisimo Vierneza, please wake up!

—FLOR MALLARI, Phase 1-B, Pacita Complex, San Pedro, Laguna

ANNOUNCEMENT

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BE> THINK> INNOVATE> GRUNDFOS

Erap lawyers should be cited for contempt of court

I'M sure all our lawyers who adhere to and have not yet forgotten their lawyer's oath agree with your editorial (PDI, 3/6/02) on the very contemptuous statements hurled by former President Estrada's lawyers against the Sandiganbayan and their baseless and frivolous attack against our judicial system.

While contempt of court may be committed both by lawyers and non-lawyers, like Estrada, the former have a greater responsibility and commitment to uphold and defend our judicial system. The Canons of Professional Ethics for lawyers mandate that a lawyer "should use his best efforts to restrain and prevent his clients from doing these things which the lawyer himself ought not to do, particularly with reference to their conduct towards courts, judicial officers, judges, witnesses and suitors. If a client persists in such wrongdoing, the lawyer should terminate their relation."

"Sana tamaan ng kidlat ang mga justices *na iyan"* is a remark that is very unbecoming to a lawyer, even if he wants to imitate the image of our *"canto* boy President," as retired Justice Isagani A. Cruz put it. Hence, I believe it is really high time that the "contempt power be availed of by the judge (or justices) who is the victim of insulting and offensive epithets. A member of the Bar, as an officer of the court, is not justified in using vile and disrespectful language."

Lastly, in one case where former Tanodbayan Justice Raul M. Gonzales, in a pleading he filed with the Supreme Court, stated that he was "approached twice by a leading member of the court" to intercede "for cases pending before the Tanodbayan," the Supreme Court held that such statements "clearly constitute contempt and call for the exercise of (its) disciplinary authority." The Supreme Court further held that Gonzales' statements "constitute the grossest kind of disrespect for the Court (that) very clearly debase and degrade the Supreme Court and, through the Court, the entire system of administration of justice in the country." Thus, the Supreme Court concluded that Gonzales "is guilty of contempt of court (and) of gross misconduct as an officer of the court and member of the Bar (and) resolved to suspend (him) from the practice of law indefinitely and until further orders from this Court."

And so it should be in the case of Estrada and his lawyers. Neither the Sandiganbayan nor the Supreme Court should not allow them to make a mockery of our judicial system and should never let them get away with their intemperate and disrespectful language which tends to put our judicial system in a bad light.

—ROMULO B. MACALINTAL, 13 Cagayan Valley St., Philamlife Village, Pamplona, Las Piñas City

Erap acting like a spoiled brat

JOSEPH Estrada is on a roll, throwing mud at our whole justice system. Although admittedly, our justice system is generally inefficient and corrupt, it is the poor and the not well connected who are victimized by its weaknesses. And that is why Erap's crying wolf doesn't wash.

We can only appreciate the supreme effort it takes for the Sandiganbayan justices handling Erap's cases to do their job, considering the vast resources Erap has brought to bear on them. The House and Senate resolutions pushing for Erap's US treatment signed by 189 Erap coddlers proves our point.

It is obvious that what Erap means by "not getting justice" is not ever getting adverse rulings on his self-serving motions, which his high-priced lawyers keep filing *ad nauseam* and ultimately to get away scot-free from all the crimes he committed. Like a spoiled brat who fears he will lose a game, he goes berserk and ruins the game for all and even threatens to call in his thugs.

Instead of being intimidated by this threat, the government should just tell the police to gear up and be ready for any repeat of the May 1 mayhem. And this time, could those cowardly masterminds, financiers and organizers of Erap (who think nothing of using the poor as cannon fodder just to protect Erap's ass) should march at the head of the mob just as former Sen. Lorenzo Tañada, Tito Guingona and Chino Roces, who led the anti-Marcos marches, took their share of truncheon blows, tear gas and water cannon.

As to the weaknesses of the justice system, Erap should do what ordinary citizens who want justice do: exercise vigilance and call for reforms. No one should make sweeping attacks against the judicial system as an institution, least of all when they are self-serving and baseless, as in Erap's case.

Besides, what Erap calls "railroading" is what all of us wish for the justice system: speedy justice, which more than ever, is needed in this celebrated case that is distracting the nation from the more urgent business of moving our country forward, so that we can put this sordid experience in our national life behind us and get on with our lives.

If Erap is as innocent as he claims, he should welcome this move so that he can prove his innocence soonest, if he can, and also get on with his life.

—ROLANDO LIBROJO, EVELYN L. KILAYKO for Kongreso ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kompil), Code-NGO, 2/F CCS Bldg., Social Development Complex, Ateneo de Manila University, Katipunan Avenue 1108 Quezon City

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

US planning possible nuking of foes

WASHINGTON—The Pentagon has informed Congress it is planning for the possible use of nuclear weapons against countries that threaten the United States—a policy shift some arms control experts say could make America more likely to use such weapons.

But a top Defense Department official said that over the next decade, it should be "far less likely" that the United States or other countries will rely on nuclear weapons.

It has been US policy not to consider using nuclear weapons except as retaliation for a nuclear strike or in exceptional cases during wartime.

The classified nuclear posture review sent to Congress in January, however, says the Pentagon is developing contingency plans for using nuclear weapons against countries such as Iraq or North Korea that are developing weapons of mass destruction.

The Los Angeles Times reported Saturday that the Pentagon is preparing contingency plans for possibly using nuclear weapons against seven nations: China, Russia, Iraq, North Korea, Iran, Libya and Syria.

"We will not discuss classified details of military planning or contingencies, nor will we comment on selective and misleading leaks," Army Lt. Col. Catherine Abbott said Saturday in the Defense Department's specific response to details in the article.

But she noted that the nuclear posture review is required by law and said "it does not provide operational guidance on nuclear targeting or planning."

Pentagon officials have said publicly they are also exploring ways to modify existing nuclear warheads to destroy underground bunkers and other "hardened" targets that countries such as Iraq might use to hide chemical, biological or nuclear arms.

Past US policy has relied mainly on the threat of conventional military force to deter the production and spread of weapons of mass destruction.

"By targeting these seven countries, some of which are new targets, the US is increasing, not decreasing, the possibility of using nuclear weapons in its policy," said Daryl Kimball, executive director of the Arms Control Association. *AP*

A WORKER dismantles a map of Cambodia made from human skulls displayed at the Toul Sleng genocide museum in the capital Phnom Penh on March 10. Officials said it was time to put the remains of victims of the Khmer Rouge "killing fields" regime in a proper resting place. REUTERS

Skulls map dismantled

PHNOM PENH—A giant map of Cambodia formed with the skulls of victims of the 1970s Khmer Rouge "killing fields" regime was removed on Sunday from a genocide museum in Phnom Penh.

Buddhist monks chanted prayers for the reincarnation of the dead as approximately 300 skulls and assorted bones were removed from the map which for 23 years has stood as a symbol of Khmer Rouge brutality in Cambodia.

The skull map, inlaid with Cambodia's two main rivers in blood-red paint, was put on display at the Tuol Sleng genocide museum after the Khmer Rouge were ousted from power in 1979.

Officials now say it is time to give the victims' remains a proper resting place.

"We removed the skulls from the map because they are now decaying and we want to preserve them in a decent place," said Chey Sopheara, director of the museum. "The map also frightened the museum's visitors."

The Tuol Sleng museum was a secondary school until 1975 when it was turned into the notorious S21 prison where the Khmer Rouge jailed, tortured and executed an estimated 16,000 people.

The prison has been preserved as a testament to the atrocities of the movement. The prison's commandant, Kang Khek Ieu, better known by his revolutionary name "Duch," is one of only two Khmer Rouge chiefs currently in detention in Cambodia. *Reuters*

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Suicide bomber kills 11; Israel retaliates

JERUSALEM—A Palestinian suicide bomber killed 11 people by blowing himself up in a crowded Jerusalem cafe near Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's residence, and Israel responded by destroying Yasser Arafat's Gaza headquarters.

The United States condemned the new violence and said it underlined the importance of a mission planned to the region by its Middle East envoy, Anthony Zinni, to try to prevent more than 17 months of bloodshed plunging into all-out war.

The suicide bomber from the Islamic militant group Hamas struck after the Jewish Sabbath ended on Saturday night, shortly after two Palestinian gunmen killed at least one Israeli in a shooting spree in the coastal city of Netanya.

Twenty-year-old Fouad Hurani detonated the bomb as he stood in a queue of people waiting for a table at the Moment Café about 100 meters from Sharon's official walled residence. He was blown to pieces with those around him.

The blast covered the floor with body parts, pools of blood and hundreds of nails and metal screws Hurani had packed into his bomb to deadly effect. Some walls were charred.

"There was a blast that was simply atomic," a witness told Israel Radio, adding that about 50 people had been in the cafe.

"People started screaming, going wild. I had never seen anything like it. Suddenly I got up and I saw—I kid you not—something like 10 or 15 people laid out, unconscious."

Another witness, Shlomi Yonatan, said some people were left dead in the chairs where they had been sitting in the cafe, in a quiet residential area where clients had thought they were safe.

Police spokesperson Gil Kleiman put the death toll at 11 and said the 54 wounded included several who were seriously hurt.

Blaming Arafat for the violence, Israel responded swiftly by carrying out the fiercest strike in 17 months of conflict on the Palestinian president's headquarters and security compound in densely-populated Gaza City.

Palestinian security sources said helicopters slammed 30 missiles into the headquarters, sweeping away a key symbol of statehood and the Palestinian president's authority in a series of blasts and blinding white flashes that lit up the night sky.

There were no reports of injuries. Arafat was not there because Israeli forces have for three months confined him to the West Bank city of Ramallah, where he has another office.

Fireman sifted through the wreckage and hosed down the smoldering rubble. Metal, plaster, wood and concrete were left strewn across the room where Arafat received foreign guests.

Furniture was ruined and a curtain dangled at an odd angle.

The building also housed studios of Palestine television.

More than 1,000 Palestinians and more than 300 Israelis have been killed since the Palestinians began an uprising against Israeli occupation in September 2000 after peace talks stalled.

In Netanya, five of the wounded, including a baby, were in a serious condition, medical officials said.

The gunmen sprayed fire at people out for an evening stroll after the Jewish Sabbath and hurled a grenade into the lobby of a hotel before police and armed bystanders gave chase.

The al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigades, a group linked to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat's Fatah movement, said it carried out the Netanya attack to avenge Israeli army raids on Palestinian refugee camps and other targets in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Hamas said it carried out the Jerusalem blast to avenge Israeli "massacres."

"What Arafat is looking for tonight is a regional deterioration in order to have the whole region involved in a regional war, and Israel will not let him do it," said Gideon Meir, an Israeli Foreign Ministry official.

Soon afterwards, tanks and bulldozers rumbled into the village of Tal al-Sultan in southern Gaza, apparently to seek out militants, Palestinian witnesses said.

Israeli helicopters fired two missiles at the al-Am'ari refugee camp in Ramallah. One missile struck a car and killed Samer Oweis, brother of Abdel-Karim Oweis, a militant who is wanted by Israel, members of his militant group said. ***Reuters***

BODIES lie in a restaurant near the home of Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon in Jerusalem after an explosion March 9. A suicide bomber walked into the cafe and blew himself up, killing 11 people and wounding 35, medics on the scene said. REUTERS

Bloodiest week in 17 months of bloody strife

JERUSALEM—On both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian divide, the language of grief has a haunting familiarity—and an eerily similar element of disbelief.

An Israeli mother, Aviva Nachmani, described her nightmarish search for her children, lost in the chaos of a suicide bombing that killed 10 people. "I hunted for them like a madwoman—I just screamed and screamed," she said. She finally found them alive.

A Palestinian farmer, Hatem Abu Teir, struggled for words after Israeli troops stormed his village in the Gaza Strip, raining heavy machine-gun fire on fields and homes and killing at least 16 people, including one of his cousins. "A very bad dream," he said finally, "mixed with blood and the sound of pain."

Even by the grim standards set in 17 unbroken months of violence, the seven days that began with a suicide bombing in the narrow streets of a synagogue-filled neighborhood of Jerusalem and ended with a hail of tank shells in Palestinian shantytowns across the West Bank and Gaza Strip left both sides wondering how much worse it can possibly get.

At least 114 Palestinians and 36 Israelis died—the highest toll during any week since the conflict erupted, in the double digits every day. The week also saw the largest number of fatalities in a single day, 45 on Friday alone. And no day passed without children, sometimes several of them, numbering among the dead or injured.

Five children from one family, the Nechmads, died in last Saturday's Jerusalem suicide bombing, and three Palestinian children were killed with their mother in a missile attack in the West Bank town of Ramallah that was meant for their father, a leader of the militant Islamic movement Hamas. One of them, 13-year-old Bara Abu Kweik, was buried with a favorite schoolbook. ***AP***

Suspect in Indonesia scam gives back funds

JAKARTA—A key suspect in an Indonesian graft scam linked to one of the country's most powerful politicians has returned the bulk of the disputed funds in the case, an official said on Sunday.

The move raised doubts among some observers about how far the government would pursue the case, widely seen as a test of whether President Megawati Sukarnoputri would meet her promises to crack down on corruption and revamp the judicial system.

Attorney General's office spokesperson Barman Zahir said Winfried Simatupang, appointed by a charity foundation to disburse 40 billion rupiah ($4 million) in funds from the state food agency Bulog to be used for food for the poor, had returned 32.5 billion rupiah to the prosecutors.

Parliamentary speaker and Golkar Party head Akbar Tandjung was detained by the Attorney General's office on Thursday over the scandal, sparking threats by some party members to withdraw from Megawati's ruling coalition. At issue is the alleged failure of the money to be used for the poor as intended.

"The total money (Simatupang) had returned is around 32.5 billion rupiah... he returned it since last week in installments and he promised to give back the whole amount by this month," Zahir said.

The development is likely to raise eyebrows among the public, mostly pleased with the detention of Tandjung, a Cabinet minister under former President Suharto and credited with keeping Golkar a major political player after the autocrat resigned in 1998.

Tandjung's detention came on the same day prosecutors charged Suharto's youngest son, Hutomo "Tommy" Mandala Putra, with masterminding a murder. ***Reuters***

Burma officials sacked over coup plot

RANGOON—Burma's chief of police, the head of the air force and an army general have been sacked in connection with an alleged coup plot by relatives of former military strongman, Ne Win, diplomats said on Sunday.

Over a dozen more senior officers were also set to be sacked or arrested over the plot, they said.

"As far as we know, Police Chief Col. Soe Win, Commander in Chief Air Major General Myint Swe, and Brigadier General Chit Than were relieved from their duty (on Friday)," a well-informed Asian diplomat based in Rangoon said.

Chit Than was Commander of the Triangle Region in Kengtung, where Burma, Thai and Laotian borders meet.

"We heard that more than a dozen, including some high-ranking ones and a senior naval officer, will also be sacked in connection with this case. But we don't know yet how they are involved in it," he said.

Burma military authorities declined to comment on the report.

The military government said on Saturday they had arrested the son-in-law and three grandsons of former president, Ne Win, for attempting to plot a coup against the military. ***Reuters***

Koizumi gov't reels from new scandal

TOKYO—A new corruption scandal rocking Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party could further undermine public support for Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and hamper his bid for structural reform of the nation's hidebound economy.

In what could be a politically explosive development, a former top aide and "treasurer" of Koichi Kato, one of a handful of reformers within the conservative LDP, was arrested last Friday for allegedly evading 100 million yen ($783,200) in income taxes.

Saburo Sato, 61, was accused of concealing a total of about 280 million yen he received from several local construction companies in exchange for helping them win government-funded projects for three years from 1997. Sato has not made any comment on the allegations.

Japanese media speculated that the scandal could spell doom for the political future of Kato who was once seen as a viable candidate to become prime minister, weakening the support base within the LDP for Koizumi.

Kato, who heads a 15-member faction within the LDP, is a long-time ally of Koizumi, along with LDP Secretary General Taku Yamasaki—known as the YKK Trio. ***Reuters***

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Report: UK asked to plan Iraq attack

LONDON—The United States has asked Britain to draft plans for 25,000 British troops to join a massive US task force against Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein, according to the Observer newspaper here Sunday.

Prime Minister Tony Blair's office promptly denied the front-page report.

"No decisions have been taken, yet alone any requests been made," a Downing Street spokesperson said.

Under the plan, as reported by the paper, Britain would supply soldiers for an overall ground force of around 250,000 troops who would sweep into Iraq in an operation similar to the 1991 Gulf War.

It would be the boldest—and riskiest—of three main options now being studied by the British government to tackle Saddam's regime.

Intense speculation that the United States might be preparing to intervene militarily in Iraq has mounted since January, when US President George W. Bush singled out the country as part of an "axis of evil."

US Vice President Dick Cheney, who holds talks here Monday with Blair, has fresh evidence of Baghdad's involvement with weapons of mass destruction, the Observer said.

Cheney is stopping in London on the first leg of a 10-nation tour designed to shore up support for action against Iraq.

The second option being considered by London, according to the Observer, is for smaller special forces units to help opposition groups within Iraq.

It would be similar to the tactics used in Afghanistan, where the Northern Alliance had military support to overthrow the Taliban regime.

The third option, the Observer said, was for "aggressive containment"—an intensification of air strikes against Iraq if Saddam does not agree to allow in UN weapons inspectors. ***AFP***

US-led forces resume bombing of Afghan caves

GARDEZ/BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan—US-led forces resumed bombing and ground attacks to keep al-Qaida rebels trapped in caves in east Afghanistan on Sunday as the sky mainly cleared over the biggest battle of the Afghan war.

As hundreds of Afghan troop reinforcements gathered for a final assault, their commanders spoke out about offering the besieged rebels a negotiated surrender, an option so far rejected by the United States military on the ground.

US military spokesperson Major Bryan Hilferty told reporters fighting had been "very light" overnight and there had been no sustained fire for three days from several hundred al-Qaida fighters holed up in the area.

"We haven't seen much activity," Hilferty told a news conference. "There's been activity, but pretty light over the past 48 hours."

Hilferty said US terms for the end of the battle near Gardez remained unconditional surrender by the rebels or death.

Speaking at Bagram air base on the outskirts of Kabul—control point for "Operation Anaconda"—Hilferty said US and Afghan forces were still inching towards the al-Qaida positions but declined to give specific details.

They were running into land mines leading up to caves, and occasional rocket-propelled grenade and heavy machine gun fire.

After driving rain and snow grounded aircraft two days ago, air traffic at Bagram picked up on Sunday as clear skies allowed helicopters to resupply 2,000 coalition troops in the freezing combat zone among mountains that soar up 3,630 meters.

The US military says eight US troops and seven Afghan soldiers have died and there have been about 100 wounded in a push to wipe out a hardened core of Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida, chief suspects for Sept. 11's attack on the United States.

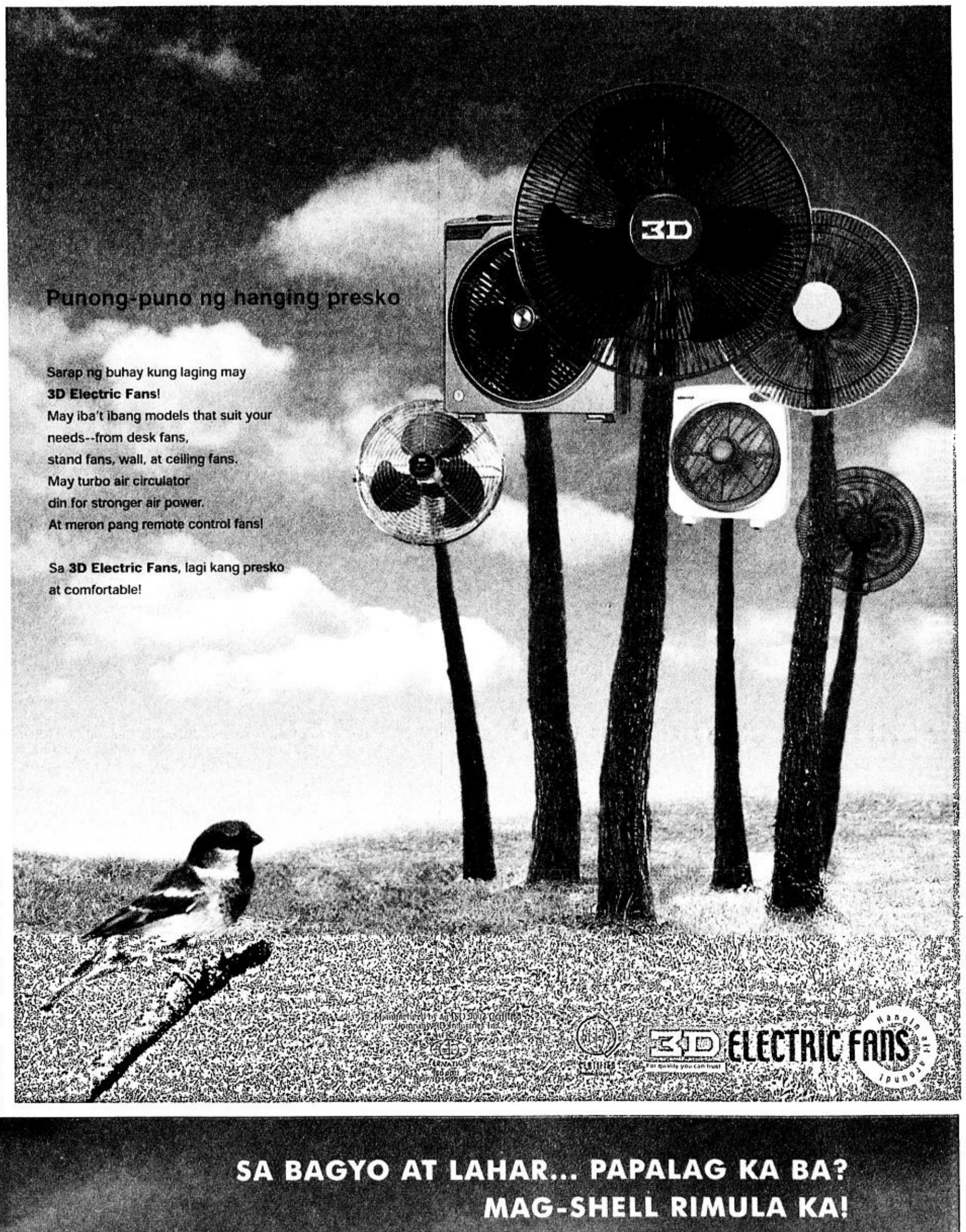
Hilferty said a number of militants had been captured and were being interrogated.

Afghan commanders said they thought fighting in the Shahi Kot combat zone in mountains near Gardez, 150 km south of the capital Kabul, could be solved with negotiations.

"I never favored military means and I still don't, as international resolutions have said that all bloodshed has to cease," said Commander Ziauddin, who controls about 100 fighters among 1,000 who arrived with tanks last Friday.

"I don't see why it has to keep going in this (military) direction," he said.

"We should first try negotiations and a peaceful solution. Our Afghan brothers should come down and surrender," Commander Gul Haider said. ***Reuters***



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MILF sees Balikatan expansion

VAL HANDUMON

AN AMERICAN soldier

DAVAO CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front on Saturday said efforts to connect it with the Abu Sayyaf and the al-Qaida terror network were part of a grand design to pressure the Macapagal administration into allowing the expansion of the Balikatan war games to other parts of Mindanao.

Murad Ebrahim, MILF military chief, said the people behind the plan to expand the RP-US military exercises to other parts of Mindanao, particularly in MILF territories, are the same people who were against the peace negotiations for various reasons.

He would not provide names, but said they included those who instigated then President Joseph Estrada to launch an all-out war against the rebel organization.

"Some sectors, including those in the military, would like to take advantage of the US troops and their sophisticated weapons against the MILF to further their own agenda," Murad, speaking from Malaysia told the INQUIRER by phone.

He said the persistent "request" to expand the Balikatan in MILF-occupied areas "are part of these consistent efforts."

Central Mindanao hosts one of the largest forces of the MILF.

There are no common estimates as to how large the rebel groups are in that region, which include Cotabato province and Sultan Kudarat, but they could be between 5,000 and 6,000.

Earlier, local executives of Maguindanao, another major base of the MILF, and Cotabato petitioned the government to hold the Balikatan in their areas.

Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol said the exercises could upgrade the capability of the police and the military in combating the kidnapping scourge.

"This is not intended for the MILF," Piñol said.

But Maguindanao Gov. Datu Andal Ampatuan said the war games should be held in his area to arm the military with knowledge and equipment against the rebel group.

Murad said holding the war games in Central Mindanao could worsen the already complicated peace and order situation there.

"We are apprehensive about the conduct of the military exercises because it would complicate the situation. But if (the expansion) can't be avoided, then the MILF would like to be assured that there would be no direct or indirect assault on our forces because it could lead to skirmishes," he said.

Murad, also chair of the MILF peace panel, urged the Macapagal administration to implement and observe the ground rules of the ceasefire agreement signed in Kuala Lumpur last year.

"This would be very important should the GRP (Government of the Republic of the Philippines) decide on expanding the Balikatan to Central Mindanao," he said.

Murad said the implementation of the ceasefire rules would ensure that there would be prior coordination between the government and the MILF, whenever there are troop movements inside rebel territories.

"There would be no misencounter that could again threaten the peace process," he said.

Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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Abducted man is Gino Padilla namesake

CABANATUAN CITY—The man who was abducted in Nueva Ecija on Friday was not singer-actor Gino Padilla but his namesake Rodolfo "Gino" Padilla, the half-brother of actor Robin Padilla and a nephew of House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla, police officials said.

SPO1 Edgar Aban, a member of the Cuyapo police and the officer-on-case, said Rodolfo, 27, also called "Gino," was abducted by five to seven men on Friday night in his farm in Barangay Bibiclat in Cuyapo.

Aban said Padilla is managing a 17-hectare farm in Bibiclat.

Representative Padilla said the "Gino Padilla" who was reported abducted was different from the man whose photograph appeared in various newspapers on Sunday.

"The Gino Padilla who was abducted is the son of the late Roy Padilla Sr., who was a former assemblyman and governor of Camarines Norte until the late 1980s, and Jennifer Serafica," Padilla explained.

Rodolfo is also the half-brother of actor Robin Padilla and former Camarines Norte Rep. Roy Padilla Jr., according to Representative Padilla.

He said singer-actor Gino Padilla is the son of Virgilio Javate and Lani Padilla, who is now based in Las Vegas. Lani Padilla is the sister of Carlos Padilla Sr. and an aunt of singer-actress Zsa-Zsa Padilla.

Representative Padilla said Rodolfo Padilla's family has sought police protection following his abduction.

The request was made as police had yet to determine a possible lead into the abduction of Rodolfo.

The men, whom the Padilla family suspected to have been hired, also shot dead Rodolfo's farm caretaker, Sixto de Gracia, and burned his farmhouse, farm tractor and car.

Padilla's farm is some 7 kilometers from the Cuyapo town proper. Cuyapo is 56 km northwest of Cabanatuan City and is near the boundary of Pangasinan.

"But as far as I'm concerned, there is no confusion because I have given a very clear description of the Gino Padilla who is now missing," Representative Padilla said.

"The only confusion perhaps is caused by the fact that both happen to be show biz celebrities because the Gino Padilla who was abducted is also a singer and also appeared in movies, sometimes alongside his brother Robin Padilla," he added.

Quoting reports from Senior Supt. Raul Bacalzo, Nueva Ecija police director, Representative Padilla said investigators are now looking at different motives behind the abduction, including kidnap-for-ransom and an unresolved land dispute in which the Padilla family was involved. ***Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Anselmo Roque and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Groups pay tribute to Iloilo women heroes

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—Women's groups here paid tribute to local women heroes in the last millennium, among them a warrior, a sorcerer, an epic chanter, guerrilla, teacher, suffragist and writer.

The tribute was part of Friday's celebration of the International Women's Day at the University of the Philippines in the Visayas and participated in by women's groups in government and non-government organizations.

Through dances, lighting of candles, songs and chanting, women's groups hoped to keep alive the memory of women who made a difference in their communities and country, said Tita Torio, history professor at UPV, who wrote the script for the tribute tableau.

The epic of indigenous communities in Panay has mentioned LaonSina, an unmarried woman, who dominates the sky world, settles conflicts and puts several men to a litmus test.

LaonSina, and a host of other female characters in several Panay epics, presents a new archetype of strong-willed, wise and courageous women, unlike the women in Western fairy tales that find salvation in the arms of their princes.

Such epics were taught to many "binukot" (concealed women) found in the interiors of central Panay. A *binukot*, who is kept from public view from age three until she reaches puberty, is a keeper of lore and tradition of the community. One of the renowned *binukot* was Preciosa Cataluna Caballero, who can chant 10 epics. An epic usually takes a week to chant on its entire length.

Dr. Alicia Magos, UPV anthropologist, said Preciosa's memory and mastery are remarkable considering that other epic chanters knew only two. She was also a skilled dancer of "binanog," an indigenous dance imitating the movements of a hawk.

Before she died in 1995 at 72, Preciosa was able to pass on the epics to her children. One of them is Federico Caballero, an epic chanter and recipient of the Gawad Manlilikha ng Bayan (national living treasure) 2000 award from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Women revolutionaries

A leading figure in Panay in the pre-colonial times was the *babaylan*, a religious leader who is also a psychologist, herbalist, an interpreter of dreams and arbiter. *Babaylanes*, which could be men or women, figured in Spanish chronicles as devil's advocates because they led pockets of revolts.

Despite the prosecution of *babaylanes*, a woman from southern Iloilo, Estrella Bangotbanwa continued the tradition in the 19th century. Oral accounts retrieved by Ma. Milagros Geremia-Lachica noted that Estrella could summon rain and strong winds by loosening her hair and raising her hands. She guarded a sacred spring in Tubungan town while her brothers guarded the spring in Antique province. In 1961, a group of *babaylanes* in Dao town, Antique, honored Estrella by naming their group "Palatukuran sang Paghidaet Estrella Bangotbanwa."

The 333 years of Spanish rule produced women characterized as dainty, demure and diffident. However, there were also women who broke the mold by joining the struggle to overthrow the Spaniards. Among them were Patrocinia Gamboa, Teresa Magbanua and Nazaria Lagos, historical accounts reveal.

Gamboa was the lone female in the Comite Conspirador, which was tasked to oversee war preparations in 1898 in Iloilo. She was remembered for carrying out difficult missions, including delivering the flag and the saber from Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo to Ilonggo revolutionaries. Gamboa slipped the flag undetected by wrapping it around her waist, and the saber by hiding it in the grass atop a carriage. She made a scene with Lt. Honorio Solinap who posed as her hen-pecked husband to distract the guards at the checkpoint.

Another well-loved woman leader was Teresa Magbanua, who, despite the objections of her husband and male relatives, joined the troops. She was good on horseback, in shooting and military strategy.

She lived to fight the Americans and even supported the resistance against the Japanese in World War II.

Like Gamboa and Magbanua, Nazaria Lagos joined the struggle against Spain by being with the revolutionaries. Lagos treated the sick and wounded, and gathered food for Ilonggo fighters. She suffered most during the Filipino-American War when American troops wiped out her house and livestock to cut off the supply. She also lost her eyesight.

Suffragists

During the American colonial rule, women aspired to be educated. They have also won their right to vote, thanks to the women suffragists, among Pura Villanueva and Sofia Reyes, all from Molo, Iloilo. Pura established the "Asosacion Feminista Ilongga" in 1907 while Sofia founded one of the earliest training school of nurses in the Philippines.

One of the noted women during this period is Magdalena Jalandoni of Jaro, born in May 27, 1891. She wrote her first "corridor" (metrical romance) at the age 10. She wrote her first novel at 16 and produced 36 more until she died in 1978. She was awarded the First Republic Cultural Heritage Award for literature in 1969.

The Japanese occupation in Panay wrought untold sufferings to women, especially the comfort women or the Japanese sex slaves. Among the brave were Esperanza Villanueva of Iloilo and Coronacion Chiva.

Torio also mentioned the Ilonggo women's contribution to the women's cause in the 1970s by organizing the local chapters of the Malayang Kilusan ng Kababaihan (Makibaka), which were forced to go underground when martial rule was declared on Sept. 21, 1972.

Marinduque police warn drug pushers

GASAN, Marinduque—The head of the provincial police force has warned potential drug peddlers not to conduct their illegal drug trade in the island with the influx of foreign and local tourists this Lenten season.

Senior Supt. Roberto Damian made the warning after he expressed concern over the possible influx of illegal drug traders disguised as Lenten pilgrims.

"What we're looking at is the possible resurgence of illegal drug trade to be initiated by pushers from the mainland, especially from the big city," Damian pointed out.

He noted the expected presence of many foreign tourists that could be easy target of criminal groups, especially those involved in illegal drug trade.

The police official disclosed that only four suspected drug peddlers used to operate in the island. "But two of them have preferred to stay in Manila recently to escape the heat of our operation here. But they could be back during the Moriones Festival and resurrect their illicit trade," Damian said.

He, however, stressed that he has already alerted his men on this.

He also assured foreign and local tourists of their safety even from the threat posed by the communist rebels. "There are only four or five members of the NPA Sandatahang Yunit Pampropaganda that operates here," he said.

He added that the combined police and military force is more than enough to counter any threat from the rebel group, which, he said, came from the Bondoc Peninsula in the nearby province of Quezon.

He stressed that all safety measures have already been put in place to safeguard the Lenten visitors. ***Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

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'They're taking away my baby,' cries mother of Baguio boy hero

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—"The government is trying to take my baby," cried the mother of Jeniston "Tonton" Diaz, who was hailed as a hero after saving two toddlers from a fire here four years ago.

Aileen Diaz complained to the INQUIRER on Friday about alleged phone calls to her son's doctor that suggested that the government wanted to take custody of the boy.

But the INQUIRER traced these calls to social workers, who were directed last month by Social Welfare Secretary Corazon Soliman to help the Diaz family, after being informed that Tonton had resorted to begging on the streets.

The principal of a childcare center, where Tonton was once enrolled, relayed the information during the 1st National Convention on Institutional Care here on Feb. 5.

Susan Argel, Department of Social Welfare and Development director for public affairs and liaison service, said the report was "fabricated."

Tonton was hailed as a hero in 1997, after he went through thick flames that engulfed their shanty, to rescue his playmates.

He suffered first-degree burns on the head and chest. He went through therapy and medication at Baguio hospitals, courtesy of politicians and private sponsors.

But the support stopped as soon as the parents of Tonton's rescued playmates disowned his heroism.

Tonton's mother said her son had been psychologically battered by the unrelenting controversies.

His physical scars, however, have healed. His burn wounds, which had festered for years, had dried up, leaving only a pale red reminder at the back of his head.

Fire razes 121 houses

BUTUAN CITY—A total of 121 houses were razed when a two-hour fire broke out in Barangay Ong Yiu and Ignacio here yesterday dawn.

At least 137 families were rendered homeless by the fire, which destroyed some P8 million worth of properties.

Police said the fire started at the house of Fe Cultura in Barangay Ong Yiu at around 2:15 a.m. The conflagration spread to the whole village, leveling down 84 houses.

Before the fire trucks of the Bureau of Fire Protection (BFP) arrived, the fire already spread to nearby Barangay Ignacio, razing 37 houses.

The fire was declared under control at around 4 a.m.

Another fire broke out in Purok 6 in Barangay Bayanihan here at 1:30 p.m. yesterday, burning down the stock room of Ever Hardware. Total damages were estimated at P100,000. ***Ma. Kristina Cassion, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

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Benguet court irregularities exposed

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Employees in two regional trial courts here have accused their executive judge of petty graft, influence peddling and improper conduct in a complaint they personally delivered to Chief Justice Hilario Davide last month.

But the accusations have, instead, prompted Executive Judge Nelsonida Ulat-Marrero to reveal several incidents of bribery, civil registry falsification and fraud at the Benguet courts that involved several of her accusers, a town judge and some lawyers.

The complaint against Marrero, a former Baguio City councilor, was transmitted to the Supreme Court on Feb. 18, three weeks after a Baguio judge issued a controversial executive order accusing four of his colleagues of offenses that ranged from the petty to a serious adultery charge.

"The complainants appeared to have been emboldened by the publicity surrounding a Jan. 25 executive order issued by Judge Ruben Ayson (that accused four fellow judges, including one of Marrero's former colleagues at the Baguio City council) of varying offenses. That's how we consider the complaint against our client," said one of Marrero's lawyers.

"It seems these incidents should make our judges worry because (Ayson) just opened a floodgate of complaints," a Benguet lawyer said in Filipino.

Marrero declined to comment publicly on the charges.

But the INQUIRER got Marrero's official response to Davide which named six of her accusers as employees being investigated for fraud, falsification of marital records involving a Benguet town judge and the town's civil registrar, and theft of court documents.

Marrero's answer also pointed to alleged pay-offs involving her employee and a lawyer defending a case lodged before her court.

She illustrated how the bribe was offered, and accepted, in exchange for a confidential court information in her Feb. 26 complaint to the SC Administrator Presbitero Velasco.

The Feb. 18 letter listed nine complaints against Marrero, including a charge of negligence for allegedly allowing her own court stenographers and clerks to "make decisions for administrative cases" and to draft pretrial orders.

The complainants also accused Marrero of using her influence to obtain choice items from government auctions of seized materials and control disbursements at the provincial capitol, and to get her daughter employed by the provincial legal office.

"(Marrero) is a judge who does not have the concept of a good judge, who does not discharge, perform her duties in accordance with the oath she took before assuming her position," the employees' complaint noted.

The employees cited instances when Marrero allegedly accused a legal researcher of nurturing an adulterous affair with a fellow judge.

She also allegedly accused one of her clerks of having a similar affair with a former clerk of court, the employees said.

They said: "It is about time the Supreme Court came to know about her actions and her conduct . . . The morale in our office is very depressing as most of us employees (would) rather be absent and (willingly) go on leave than (spend) a day in the office putting up with her undesirable and abusive conduct."

The complainants transmitted to Davide copies of a taped recording purportedly of Marrero's alleged tantrums. They also sent photographs of items Marrero supposedly accumulated using her influence as executive judge.

But in her March 7 rejoinder that was submitted to Davide, Marrero said most of the complaints arose after she instituted Supreme Court circulars regulating operations at the Benguet courts.

Copra prices shoot up in Southern Mindanao

DAVAO CITY—Due to the low production of coconut in the country, the price of copra in Southern Mindanao will continue to rise until December of this year.

Lornito Orillaneda, regional manager of the Philippine Coconut Authority, said copra price during the first quarter is much higher at P10.60 per kilo compared to P7 to P8 last year.

"It will reach P12 by December because we project a low production this year because of the coming El Niño which will affect coconut production," he said.

The PCA has stopped its fertilization program, which ran from 1991 to 1995, because of lack of funds that contributed to the declining coconut production.

"Until 1999, (farmers were harvesting) 40 to 45 coconuts per tree but now there are only 30 coconuts per tree," he said.

As a result, they reduced their national volume target to just 4 million metric tons of coconut this year, a million metric tons less than last year's production.

He said coconut production last year generated $600 million, while for the first quarter of this year, revenues could not even reach $3 million. ***Joel Escovilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

BING GONZALES

SURPLUS MACHINES
The influx of surplus items is making the Philippines a global junkyard.

Zambo Norte mayor faces graft charges

DIPOLOG CITY—Television journalist-turned-Mayor Cesar Soriano of Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte, and several other town officials are facing graft charges before the town council.

Soriano, former bureau chief of ABS-CBN in Mindanao and a second-termer mayor, along with municipal accountant Cecilia Amilasan, town treasurer Anallie Saracho and budget officer Gloria Micubo were also charged with violation of the anti-graft and corrupt practices act for allegedly pocketing funds from the town's coffer.

Records obtained by the INQUIRER showed that Soriano purchased heavy equipment for his town in the last quarter of 1998. The check amounting to P5,980,000 for a unit of payloader, a Komatsu grader and roadroller, was paid by the mayor to Welcon Motor Sales in 1998.

But agent-on-case Jose Odellon Cabillan said the town government received the equipment only on Feb. 29, 1999.

"Section 88 of PD 1445 states that 'except with the prior approval from the Office of the President of the Philippines, the government shall not be obliged to make an advance payment of services not yet rendered or for supplies and materials not yet delivered," Cabillan said in his report.

He said there was no justification for making an advance payment, except the prior approval of the President.

It was also found that Soriano did not furnish the town council office and the office of the vice mayor a copy of the result of the bidding and the winning bidder.

The bidding committee also did not submit a report of inspection made by the technical committee on the status of the heavy equipment.

Despite the defects, however, the budget officer, treasurer and accountant signed the documents for the purchase with the concurrence of Soriano.

Soriano also allegedly asked and obtained P20,000 from 21 applicants of stalls that he constructed without the approval of the Sangguniang Bayan.

Elsie Tolentino, a utility worker assigned at the public market collected the payment. No official receipt was issued to the stall applicants and the amount collected was never turned-over to the office of the town treasurer.

Soriano said the stalls were a project of the stall owners themselves, not the government's.

"We just provided them with money. They contributed P20,000 each because they owned it, we just helped," he said. ***Lullie Micabalo, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

4 killed in Davao mishap

By Anthony Allada
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—Four persons were killed while several others were injured when the Philtranco bus they were riding in plunged into a ravine in Barangay Banlag in Monkayo, Compostela Valley on Saturday night.

One of those killed was identified as Noel Rodriguez, a resident of Kapalong, Davao del Norte. The three others remained unidentified.

In his report to the regional police office, Senior Insp. Miguel Vargas, chief for operations and plans of the Compostela Valley police command, said the incident took place at around 10:45 p.m.

Vargas said the bus with plate number PYU-319 was on its way to Davao City from Pasay City, when it lost control and fell into a ravine.

Elvie Abing, a bus passenger, said the driver could have fallen asleep as they observed that, minutes before the incident, he was driving in a zigzag manner.

Abing said she jumped from the bus when she noticed that it was about to plunge into the ravine. She sustained minor bruises.

Abing said those killed were sitting near the driver.

Those injured were brought to the Montevista District Hospital.

Baguio studes publish Erap parody book

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—When deposed President Joseph Estrada suddenly "confessed" he was Jose Velarde in a television interview by broadcaster Pia Hontiveros recently, he might have already seen his copy of an amateurish anti-Erap parody book that was published in January by a group of Baguio students.

This raw, very bawdy and slightly subversive 74-page parody book called "Anti-ERAPtion" was sent on Feb. 20 to Hontiveros by its novice publisher, Giovanni Caparas, 25, days before that controversial interview.

Caparas said Estrada's special copy had the following dedication: "*Hindi na makakalimutan ng mga Pilipino ang kawalanghiyaan mo* (The Filipino people will no longer forget your atrocities)."

"I sent a note asking Hontiveros and ABS-CBN, as a favor, to deliver Erap's copy when they saw him. I haven't heard from Hontiveros yet. I was certain she would show it to him. I was watching that interview. I don't know why these episodes are falling into place. But suddenly, our book is becoming relevant," Caparas said in Filipino.

Gag books that bite into the Estrada mystique are virtually a dime-a-dozen a year after Edsa II that ousted the former actor-turned president, Caparas said.

But that did not stop Caparas and architecture students of a Baguio university from publishing their own rather vicious take on the fallen leader.

The "Anti-ERAPtion" cartoons conspicuously approached the character of Estrada with juvenile cruelty characteristic of the average teenage street humor.

On Page 47 is a cartoon of the former president urinating on a tree. Pages 32, 42, and 58 feature a naked Estrada prancing around with a tumescent screw bolt attached to his groin, and chasing equally naked women. Another page shows a military-uniformed cartoon figure it identified as Sen. Gregorio Honasan.

Pages 8 and 9 feature a mock television commercial storyboard that had a paunchy cartoon Estrada scratching his groin and backside, and picking his nose, before proceeding to feed a child using his hands. The child retches in a five second segment, before collapsing dead in a subsequent segment.

Baguio images adorn the book: A cartoon image of Sen. John Osmeña stares lovingly at familiar Baguio woodcraft like the wooden man-in-the barrel and the penis ashtray. A page is devoted to the first and the very last report of the so-called "Erap Mansion."

A compound traced to Estrada friend, banker Manuel Zamora, and a series of log homes at Camp John Hay rumored to be owned by the fallen president's former cronies, are located in Baguio.

The book also contains "smart facts" about Estrada's numerous "sins," which Caparas drew straight from the INQUIRER and books on the two Edsa revolutions.

It also takes amateurish digs at Estrada's former Cabinet members and friends, including controversial Sen. Panfilo Lacson and former Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago.

"Anti-ERAPtion" mocks Estrada's popular and myth-making book, "ERAPtion," which reinforced Estrada's iconic legend with self-conscious pokes at Estrada's humorous pratfalls.

"We all knew ERAPtion was the material which his presidential campaign managers used to prop up his image as a man from the masses—a very approachable man of the masses. Our collection of gags was to show to the same masses who adore him that Estrada is really something else. In my foreword, I said in the succeeding pages is the character of Estrada that (his supporters) did not include in the ERAPtion book, the character of Estrada that his supporters still ignore," Caparas said.

Most of the artwork was compiled from six-months of intermittent brainstorming by Saint Louis University students Angel Misa Jr.; Jethro Tactay; May Liquete; Chester Ronquillo; Caparas' former dormitory mate McNeil Canicula; Sheila Pilien; Natalie Roy; and Gilbert Versoza.

A Manila-based fine arts graduate, Ramises Gallano, frequented Baguio last year to help out, Caparas added.

Caparas said "Anti-ERAPtion" was published using his own funds. "I worked for a while for my father's business, and when I earned enough, I financed this book (for P50,000). I have done the same for two other self-published projects, and this will be my way of financing a follow-up, 'The Blueprint of a Good President' where we intend to provide (Ms Macapagal) our suggestions for saving the country," he said.

But Caparas said fate appeared to have tethered his book to Estrada's "new script" since it went off the press in January.

Missing the anniversary celebration of Estrada's downfall last Jan. 20, Caparas said he managed to distribute copies of "Anti-ERAPtion" through a bookstore chain for last month's 16th anniversary celebration of Edsa 1.

ROUNDUP

2 village chiefs slain

BANGUED, Abra—The week-long Arya Abra Festival ended in bloodshed on Saturday after two armed men shot dead two village officials here. Reynaldo Batalier, 42, of Barangay Namarabar, and Restituto Benosa, 51, of Barangay Tat-tawa, both in Peñarubia town, members of a delegation from Peñarubia during the Arya Abra parade, tried to take a shorter route to the provincial capitol, where the parade would end, when two armed men shot and killed them instantly. Supt. Arturo Quilop, acting Abra police director said recovered from the ambush scene were three empty shells of cal. 22 pistol and a magazine assembly with 11 live bullets of a cal. 45 pistol.

Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

NPA kills cop

TAYABAS, Quezon—A retired policeman was killed by a suspected New People's Army hit man in Barangay Ibabang Wakas, this town. Police said the victim, SPO4 Romulo Jalla, 51, of Happy Village, Barangay Wakas here was shot twice in the head with a cal. 38 revolver by an unidentified suspect. The suspect then walked away casually from the scene of the crime, leaving behind a note that said in Filipino: "Do not imitate this—CPP/NPA."

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

2 militiamen shot

CAMP NAKAR, Lucena City—Two members of the Citizens' Armed Forces Geographical Unit were killed by suspected New People's Army rebels in two separate incidents in Quezon. A police report said Alex Patiño, 40, Cafgu member and resident of Barangay Paaralan, Plaridel, was shot inside his house. He suffered at least 10 fatal bullet wounds in different parts of the body. Another Cafgu member, Allanly Alba, 25, a militiaman under the Army's 74th Infantry Battalion, was killed in Barangay Magsaysay, Mulanay.

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Toy gun wounds boy

LUCENA CITY—An elementary school pupil shot and wounded a high school student in the right thigh with a toy gun converted into a real weapon, after their respective gangs crossed each other's path Thursday evening. Police said the victim, Marco Escobillo, a sophomore from the Quezon National High School, suffered a bullet wound caused by a cal. 22 bullet, which was fired from a converted pellet toy gun. The suspect was identified only as Samboy, who boxed the victim and then shot him. The suspect is now in the custody of the Department of Social Welfare and Development pending the filing of charges.

Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

7 drug users yield

SAN PABLO CITY—Seven alleged drug users have surrendered to government authorities following a massive campaign against illegal drugs in the city. Edgardo Collado of the City Information Office said the seven suspects voluntarily presented themselves to Mayor Florante Aquino recently in coordination with Three C Barangay Captain Ramil Enubio and Task Force Bantay Kapayapaan head Danny Young.

Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

RP losing Kalayaan

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—The Philippines appears to be at the losing end on its claim to the Kalayaan Island Group in the western part of Palawan, Rep. Roque Ablan, House committee on foreign affairs, said here last week. Ablan said this in reference to the repeated incidents of intrusion of Chinese fishing vessels in Philippine waters. "Precisely, we are losing so much because we have tolerated the construction of permanent structures and they have pushed through with it in the last five years," he added.

Geraldford Ticke, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

GMA pledges P30M to CFC

BATANGAS CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo pledged P30 million for the Couples for Christ's Gawad Kalinga project in San Jose Sico here. The President's recent visit here was aimed at drumming up support for the CFC's Serving in God's Army program which has been helping displaced and poor families build their own houses and set up livelihood. Mari Oquiñena of CFC-Manila said the President gave fresh hope and strength to the Gawad Kalinga, which also provides technical training for the out-of-school youth.

Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Abellana, 55

CEBU CITY—Cebu City Councilor Eleno Abellana Sr., known for his advocacy for the plight of the city's street children, died at around 11 a.m. yesterday due to a lingering illness. He was 55. Abellana died in his sleep in his residence at V. Rama Avenue, this city, his family said. Despite his illness, Abellana hardly missed the city council's sessions. Abellana was survived by his wife, Glynna Paz, 50, and their three sons, Eleno Jr., 31; Eleno III, 27; and Mark Joshua, 4. Interment will be announced later.

Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol region, Eastern Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hi31° Lo 18°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 23° Lo 11°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 28° Lo 18°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 19°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 18°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 18°
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 23°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 20°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 22°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 24°
Cebu	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 23°
Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 25°
Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 32° Lo 23°
Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 29° Lo 22°
Davao	Cloudy with Rains	Hi 30° Lo 24°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/03/11/02

We Support the PEACe Bonds

As private organizations and individuals sworn to uphold the principles of transparency and fairness in the conduct of our work, we believe in the Poverty Eradication and Alleviation Certificates (PEACe Bonds) as an innovative fund-raising mechanism.

We believe that the process by which the PEACe Bonds were issued was transparent and aboveboard.

We believe in the integrity of the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO), the private financial institutions, the individuals as well as the government agencies that were involved in the issuance, sale and purchase of the PEACe Bonds.

We ask Congress to conduct an objective, fair and impartial assessment of the legality and propriety of the PEACe bonds transaction by looking at all the facts concerning the issuance of the bonds.

We appeal to everyone, most especially to the media and our leaders in government, to uphold their responsibility and dignity in giving out nothing but facts and plain truth, so that we may finally realize our dream of having a sustainable future for all.

Let us now start helping our fellow Filipinos. Let the PEACe bonds benefit the poor and marginalized sectors of our society.

Individuals

Fernando Zobel de Ayala•Jaime Agusto Zobel de Ayala•Manuel V. Pangilinan, Chairperson, Philippine Business for Social Progress•Paul G. Dominquez, Chairperson, PBSP Mindanao Regional Committee•Jesus P. Tambunting, Co-Vice Chairperson, PBSP•Ma. Luisa Y. Perez-Rubio, President, PBSP•Ramon R. del Rosario, Treasurer, PBSP•Roberto E. Aboitiz, Board Member, PBSP•Joselito D.Y. Campos, Board Member, PBSP•Jerry S. Isla, Board Member, PBSP•Cesar V. Purisima, Board Member, PBSP•Pedro E. Roxas, Board Member, PBSP•Bienvenido A. Tan, Jr., Board Member, PBSP•Catherine M. Weir, Board Member, PBSP•Vitaliano Nañagas III•Raul Socrates C. Banzuela•Evelyn L. Kilayko•Ileana R.J. Cruz•Bernadette B. Lingo•Lydia S. Enrile•Lemia Simbulan•Ma. Estrella A. Penunia•Myrna Gejar•Chaco Molina•Ka Poning Tolentino•Roy A. Calfoforo•Cora Tan•Teddy Lopez•Chris Palabay•Fathima S. Abdulasan•Marlene B. de Castro•Marietta T. ParagAs•Donato Bumacas•Maricel J. Jarencio•Josephine Dajuela•Ma. Rosario R. Lopez•Elita Herrera•Delfin Cabjuan•Ana Eva G. Villanueva•Lorena Canja-Navallasca•Yusah I. Baddong•Emmanuel Solis, Jr.•Edgardo Apoya•Renato Gonio, Sr.•Constantino Rabara•Sr. Leontina Castillo, OSA• Mario Encabo•Evelia Tizon•Ana Marie Karaos•Joey P. Pon-an•Berkis A. Basaluddin•Fe D. Cochesa•Charmae Nercua•Francisco Fernandez•Elvinia V. Elegino•Sergio Jorillo•Gladison V.S.R. Acasio•Msgr. Manuel P. Alonzo, Jr.•Dr. Paciano P. Bacani•Bienvenido A. dela Cruz•Lecira V. Juarez•Rowel Candelaria•Antonio C. Arañas•Salvador L. Arabit•Edwin Patrick M. Chebat•Clifford R. Gregorio•Loreto L. Ramiro•Fermin Gonzales•Edgar Comeros•Rodolfo Dalangin•Antonio B. Buena•Nemesio Miranda•Rafael Gayaso•Francisco Mabaso, Jr.•Annie Sandalo•Angelina Galang•Vicky Segovia•Edith dela Cruz•Tessa Oliva•Mila Serrana•Mira Reyes•Napoleon Reymunde•Alejandro Abian•Vicente A. Fabe•Fiorello A. Lirios•Fred S. Rosario•Ria Salonga•Lily Alcantara•Willie C. Brojas•Jhune B. Pacis•Bongbong B. Marquez•Pert Auxilio•Angel L. Tormon•Rogelio A. Siaboc•Marcial Esperas, SJ•Jose A. Mabulay, Jr.•Vic Abrogueña•Rev. Sofronio C. Pass•Felix G. Vergara, Jr.•Cindy Mae Caalim•Leonardo Bautista•Eileen C. Ipulan•Antonio B. Polinar•Leonardo Sison•Rolando P. Lacanaria•Antonio M. Liao•Alda S. Ramos•Mariper M. Mercader•Luchie B. Salcedo•Nila C. Ipong•Edwin M. Pabelonia•Sanerio D. Navarro•Digna Roslinda-Udtohan•Wilfredo J. Homicillada•Melvin Purzuelo•Reynaldo D. Orola•Rose Celine C. Areño•Mary Lou B. Larroza•Estaneslao Dalatse•Jocelyn L Funtecha•Randolph C. Limjoco•Bienvenido A. Tan, Jr.•Dionisio Daborbon•Danilo S. Palabrica•Nilo T. Hinojales•Teresita R. Infante•Lolita Delgado Fansler•Dominica B. Chua•Rory Francisco-Tolentino•Ruben Cajigas•Eduardo O. Labares•Washington Sycip•Nina L. Saplala•Angelo P. Candelaria•Bro. Robert McGovern•Rommel L. Martinez•Susan M. Sala•Augusto P.I. Carpio III•Angelina C. Bucu•Victoria S. Ungco•Jose Ma. M. Mendoza•Virgie Manalo•Francisco W. Maravilla•Dolora H. Cardeno•Norman Q. Jiao•Agnes Q. Villaruz•Lina B. Laigo•Marvee Celi•Yolanda P. Alim•Emmanuel C. Areño•Marietta L. Alonzo•Renand M. Marasigan•Ronald Leonizo•Roberto Almente•Ben Villa•Rafael E. Lazaro, Jr.•Grace P. Negad•Rogelio S. Cartalla•Belarmino O. Navarro III•Sylvia Okinlay-Paraguya•Rachel B. Malabanan•Jacqueline D. de la Peña•Emely Alcoseba•Mercedes B. Concepcion•Santiago Dumlao•Vicenta M. Escobar•Octavio V. Espiritu•Peter D. Garrucho, Jr.•Aurora Silayan-Go•Jose P. de Jesus•Vicente H. Lim, Jr.•Conrado Ll. Lorenzo, Jr.•Vicente J.A. Rosales•Patricia C. Sison•Melbourge Corregidor•Ali Avellana•Paulina Lawsin-Nayra•Laureen Dumaguing•Marichu Balmes•Mario Taguiwalo•Aurelio Montinola III•Cavlin L.R. Genotiva•Leandro Locsin, Jr.•Bart Guingona•Jeremy S. Eliab•Trina Belamide•Vincent Lazatin•Henedina Razon-Abad•Marian P. Roces•Ella Antonio•Cielito Habito•Climaco Elayo•Dulce Festin-Baybay•Romeo J. Intengan, S.J.•Hally Atienza•Sulpicio Alferez, Jr.•Bernadette Balo-Duthy•Numeriano dela Torre, Jr.•Rebecca Domondon•Melanie Garcia•Analyn C. Fuentespina•Mahar Mangahas•Chito Salazar•Doris Magsaysay-Ho•Bobbit Librojo•Mary Racelis

Organizations

Association of Foundations•Agri-Aqua Development Coalition•KABIBA Alliance for Children's Concern•National Secretariat for Social Action-Justice and Peace•Philippine Business for Social Progress•LAGSADECO•MINCON•Cordillera Network of NGOs and POs•Council of Organized Social Services Agencies Mindanao•Coalition of Bicol Development NGOs•Mindanao Coalition of Development NGOs•Baguio NGO Multisectoral Council, Inc.•Kataguwan Center•Philippine Partnership for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Areas•Couples for Christ•Center for Community Services•BALAYAN•ASSRC•KAKASAKA-SUGBU•BSBI•KKP•Bulan Urban Poor Council Federation, Inc.•Bicol Alliance of People's Organizations and Cooperatives•AY Foundation, Inc.•League of Corporate Foundations•The Women's Media Circle•Kabalaka Development Foundation, Inc.•Batanes Development Foundation, Inc.•Buhi Ecumenical Development Association•Center for Agrarian Reform and Rural Development•Foundation for Development Alternatives•Infanta Integrated Community Development Assistance, Inc.•Institute of Social Order•Katipunan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka•Lingap Para sa Kalusugan ng Sambayanan•Mandiga Ob-Obbo Community Center, Inc.•Mother Rosa Memorial Foundation•NORFIL Foundation, Inc.•Northern Luzon Federation of Cooperative Development Center, Inc.•Organizing for Rural Development•Pag-asang Bicolnon Foundation, Inc.•Participatory Research Organization of Communities and Education Towards Struggle for Self-Reliance-Luzon, Inc.•Philippine Association for Intercultural Development, Inc.•The Foundation of Our Lady of Fatima Center for Human Development•MAGSAKA-CA•Appropriate Technology Center•Associates for Integral Development Foundation, Inc.• Foundation for Growth and Organizational Upliftment for People, Inc.•Josefa Segovia Foundation, Inc•KAANIB Foundation, Inc.•KAHAYAG Foundation, Inc.•Maguindanao Development Foundation, Inc.•Mainland Development Center Association, Inc.•Mindanao Grassroots Development Institute•Mindanao Lumad and Muslim Development Center Foundation, Inc.•Misamis Occidental Federation of Cooperatives•South Cotabato Foundation, Inc.•Surigao Sur Organization for Human Development, Inc.•Technology Outreach and Community Help Foundation, Inc.•Tinabangay sa Panguma Alayon sa Industriya Foundation, Inc.•Xavier Agricultural Extension Service Institute of Market Analysis and Rural Development•Bohol Integrated Develpment Foundation, Inc.•Chito Foundation, Inc.•Foundational Center, Inc.•Guiuan Development Foundation, Inc.•Katin-aran Center Foundation, Inc.•Leyte Samar Rural Development Workers Association, Inc.•Mag-Uugmad Foundation, Inc.•Movement for Enlightened, Vigilant Endeavor Towards Liberation from Injustice and Oppression, Inc.•Paghida-et sa Kauswagan Development Group, Inc.•Pagtambayayong Foundation, Inc.•PROCESS-Bohol•PROCESS-Luzon•Plan International Philippines-Cebu•Samar Kauswagan Foundation, Inc.•South Pacific Integrated Area Development Foundation, Inc.•St. Catherine Family Helper Project, Inc.•Philippine Community Organizers' Society•Rotary Club of New Manila East•AR NOW!•Pakisama•PASCRES•Social Democratic Caucus•National Confederation of Cooperatives•National Council of Social Development•Partnership of Philippine Support Service Agencies•CODE-NGO NCR•Visayas Network of Development NGOs•MASS-SPECC Cooperative Development Center

advt.

2,000 flunk drug tests for drivers

From page A1

conducted only in the National Capital Region in October 2001 alone," Dr. Carlito Cubelo of the DDB said.

Cubelo said the DDB was still collating figures for the succeeding months. "Even so, the October data indicates how serious the drug problem has become," he said.

According to estimates of the Philippine National Police, there are at present 2 million drug users in the country.

To curb the drug problem, the LTO last October started to require all applicants for a driver's license to undergo drug tests.

LTO chief Roberto Lastimoso said he would push for stricter penalties for license applicants found positive for drug use.

Under existing regulations, the LTO merely refers an applicant who tests positive for drug use to concerned government agencies for counseling and rehabilitation.

"After rehab, an applicant may reapply for a driver's license," said Lastimoso, a former PNP chief.

The Dangerous Drugs Act punishes not only pushers but also users. "So if our office finds anybody positive for drug use, it should be our responsibility to report him/her to authorities," Lastimoso said.

The Senate and House of Representatives are expected to come out soon with amendments to the anti-drugs law imposing harsher penalties for offenders.

Nani: I just took a peek at Erap

From page A1

dent for a wreath laying for the late President Jose P. Laurel in Tanauan.

Perez denied speculations that he was there to arrange a meeting between the President and Estrada.

Sources earlier said the President's visit was prearranged but that Estrada changed his mind while the President was en route to the hospital from the NBN headquarters.

"The security people asked me to be there at 8 a.m. which was rather early," Perez explained. He said the President's convoy arrived after 9 a.m.

Hospital staff

Perez said he whiled away his time reading the newspapers. "So while I was reading, (some doctors and hospital staff) pointed Erap's detention suite to me. So *wala, sinisilip ko lang kung makikita ko* (I just made a peep in the hope that I could see him)," Perez said.

He said Ms Macapagal did not even try to look at Estrada's suite.

"When she arrived, she just waved at and shook the hands of the hospital staff (members)," the justice secretary said.

Perez said it only took seconds for the President to alight from her limousine and to board the presidential chopper.

"The President did not see him. We left as soon as she arrived (from the NBN)," Perez said.

The President does not intend to visit her jailed predecessor because she is leaving his fate to Sandiganbayan, according to her spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao.

"She doesn't have any plans of visiting Erap because as we said, this is a matter for the Sandiganbayan to decide," Tiglao said yesterday.

Ms Macapagal visited Estrada twice—first at his detention cell in Sata. Rosa, Laguna, and second, at the VMMC—since his ouster in January last year.

Tiglao said Estrada and his "spin doctors" were starting to "hallucinate" that the President had tried to visit him in their effort to draw attention to the former leader.

He described as "atrocious" claims that Ms Macapagal had waited to be given an audience with Estrada.

"The President did not have any intention of visiting Estrada and I think we have to realize that we're making issues out of a non-issue," Tiglao said.

He reiterated that the President went to the VMMC where she boarded a Batangas-bound chopper.

"The President went there because it was business as usual for her," Tiglao said. "And it didn't mean anything that Estrada was at the same place where a helipad was available."

Tiglao said it was Estrada himself who admitted that "there wasn't really any word in advance" that Ms Macapagal was coming over to visit her.

"Why would people interpret it as an attempt by the President to go there," Tiglao said. "Erap and his spin doctors are starting to panic and they are trying to get the President's attention."

Speaker Jose de Venecia joined the flurry of denials from the administration about the President's foiled attempt to visit Estrada.

"That story is completely false according to (Executive) Secretary (Alberto) Romulo," De Venecia told the INQUIRER late Saturday night.

De Venecia said that as soon as the INQUIRER phoned him to ask about the visit, he called up Romulo to verify the report.

And like the presidential spokesperson's line, De Venecia said the President was at the VMMC because it was the nearest and safest landing area for the presidential chopper.

When first told about the report, De Venecia expressed surprise, saying he was not aware of a schedule.

Press Undersecretary Roberto Capco likewise phoned the INQUIRER late Saturday, saying the story was *"matinding kuryente,"* journalistic parlance for false reports.

"I have the tapes to show the President's whereabouts (the whole day)," Capco said.

He said the President was at the NBN to tape a sequel to her much criticized "Ina ng Bayan" spiel on TV.

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Domestic Flight Schedules and Passenger Fares

FROM: MANILA TO:	FLIGHT NO.	FREQUENCY	DEP	ARR	TO: MANILA FROM:	FLIGHT NO.	FREQUENCY	DEP	ARR	NORMAL BUSINESS J	UPGRADABLE Y CYC (Valid for travel 16Mar02-31May02, 16Dec02-23Jan03)	UPGRADABLE Y CYS (Valid for travel 24Jan01-15Mar02, 01Jun02-15Dec02)	NORMAL ECONOMY Y	SPECIAL SAVER SPR
Bacolod	PR131	Daily	05:15	06:25	Bacolod	PR132	Daily	07:25	08:25	3,385	3,248	3,148	3,028	2,698
	PR133	Daily	09:20	10:30		PR134	Daily	11:20	12:20					
	PR135	Daily	15:25	16:35		PR136	Daily	17:25	18:25					
	PR157	Daily (*)	18:00	19:10		PR158	Daily (*)	20:10	21:10					
	(*) Cancelled until 15 March					(*) Cancelled until 15 March								
Butuan	PR477	Daily	10:45	12:15	Butuan	PR478	Daily	13:15	14:40	-	-	-	3,868	3,538
Cagayan de Oro	PR181	Daily	05:10	06:40	Cagayan de Oro	PR182	Daily	07:40	09:05	4,941	4,038	3,938	3,868	3,488
	PR183	Daily	10:00	11:30		PR184	Daily	12:30	13:55					
	PR185	Daily	13:10	14:40		PR186	Daily	15:30	16:55					
Cebu					Cebu	PR842	Daily Ex Tu	05:30	06:40	3,518	3,368	3,268	3,048	2,718
	PR843	Tu/We/Su	05:00	06:15		PR844	Tu/Th/Su	07:30	08:40					
	PR847	Daily	07:30	08:45		PR848	Daily	09:45	10:55					
	PR853	Daily	09:30	10:45		PR854	Daily	11:45	12:55					
	PR857	Mo/Tu/Fr	12:00	13:15		PR858	Mo/Tu/Fr	14:15	15:25					
	PR867	We/Th/Sa/Su	13:00	14:15										
	PR849	Daily	14:45	16:00		PR852	Daily	17:00	18:10					
	PR863	Daily	16:40	17:55		PR866	Daily	19:10	20:20					
						PR868	Sunday	20:25	21:35					
	PR855	Daily Ex Mo	19:45	21:00		PR856	Th/Su	21:50	23:00					
Cotabato	PR187	Daily	09:50	11:25	Cotabato	PR188	Daily	12:25	13:55	5,539	4,038	3,938	3,868	3,538
Davao	PR809	Daily	05:10	06:55	Davao	PR810	Daily	08:10	09:50	5,403	4,038	3,938	3,818	3,388
	PR811	Daily	11:00	12:45		PR812	Daily	14:00	15:40					
	PR815	Daily	16:30	18:15		PR816	Daily	19:15	20:55					
Dipolog (Dapitan)	PR167	Mo/Tu/We/Th/Fr(*)	10:05	11:35	Dipolog (Dapitan)	PR168	Mo/Tu/We/Th/Fr(*)	12:35	13:55	-	-	-	3,868	3,538
	PR165	Saturday	14:45	16:15		PR166	Saturday	16:55	18:15					
	(*) Cancelled - Th freq until 30 March					(*) Cancelled - Th freq until 30 March								
General Santos	PR453	Daily	06:30	08:15	General Santos	PR454	Daily	10:05	11:50	4,288	4,038	3,938	3,918	3,488
Iloilo	PR139	Daily	05:25	06:30	Iloilo	PR140	Daily	07:30	08:30	3,385	3,248	3,148	3,028	2,698
	PR141	Daily	09:45	10:50		PR142	Daily	11:50	12:50					
	PR143	Daily	14:40	15:45		PR144	Daily	16:35	17:35					
	PR145	Sa/Su(*)	17:45	18:50		PR146	Sa/Su(*)	19:50	20:50					
	PR147	Mo/Tu/We/Th/Fr(*)	16:55	18:00		PR148	Mo/Tu/We/Th/Fr(*)	19:00	20:00					
	(*) Cancelled until 15 March					(*) Cancelled until 15 March								
Kalibo	PR321	Daily	09:40	10:35	Kalibo	PR322	Daily	11:25	12:15	-	-	-	3,148	2,818
	PR239	Daily Ex Mo/We(*)	11:10	12:05		PR240	Daily Ex Mo/We(*)	13:05	13:55					
	PR325	Daily(**)	14:30	15:25		PR326	Daily(**)	16:15	17:05					
	(*) Cancelled until 14March					((*) Cancelled until 14 March								
	(**) Cancelled until 15 March					(**) Cancelled until 15 March								
Legazpi	PR277	Daily	07:30	08:25	Legazpi	PR278	Daily	09:05	09:55	-	-	-	2,658	2,438
Naga	PR261	Mo/We/Th/Sa/Su	07:00	07:50	Naga	PR262	Mo/We/Th/Sa/Su	08:30	09:15	-	-	-	1,938	1,728
Puerto Princesa	PR195	Daily	08:20	09:35	Puerto Princesa	PR196	Daily	10:50	12:05	3,990	3,798	3,698	3,578	3,248
Roxas	PR189	Daily	05:40	06:35	Roxas	PR190	Daily	07:35	08:30	-	-	-	2,588	2,248
Tacloban	PR191	Daily	05:20	06:35	Tacloban	PR192	Daily	07:35	08:45	3,724	3,368	3,268	2,948	2,618
	PR193	Daily	13:40	14:55		PR194	Daily	15:35	16:45					
Tuguegarao	PR238	Mo/We/Sa	10:10	11:05	Tuguegarao	PR237	Mo/We/Sa	12:05	13:00	-	-	-	2,388	-
Zamboanga	PR123	Daily	04:50	06:20	Zamboanga	PR124	Daily	07:20	08:50	5,341	4,038	3,938	3,918	3,488
	PR127	Mo/Tu/We/Th/Fr	14:35	16:05		PR128	Mo/Tu/We/Th/Fr	16:45	18:15					
	PR125	Sa/Su	15:30	17:00		PR126	Sa/Su	17:00	18:30					
FROM: CEBU TO:					TO: CEBU FROM:									
Bacolod	PR370	Daily(*)	06:30	07:05	Bacolod	PR371	Daily(*)	07:45	08:20	-	-	-	1,978	1,538
	(*) Every Tu/Th/Su cancelled until 15March					(*) Every Tu/Th/Su cancelled until 15 March								
Davao	PR409	Daily	09:00	09:55	Davao	PR410	Daily	10:35	11:30	-	-	-	2,688	2,248
	PR459	We/Fr/Su	15:20	16:15		PR460	We/Fr/Su	16:55	17:50					
Iloilo	PR380	Mo/We/Fr/Sa(*)	12:30	13:10	Iloilo	PR381	Mo/We/Fr/Sa (*)	13:50	14:30	-	-	-	2,198	1,758
	PR380	Tu/We/Fr/Sa/Su(***)	12:30	13:10		PR381	Tu/We/Fr/Sa/Su (***)	13:50	14:30					
	PR245	Tu/Th/Su(*)	05:10	05:50		PR246	Tu/Th/Su (*)	06:30	07:10					
	PR245	Mo/Th(**)	12:30	13:10		PR246	Mo/Th (**)	17:00	17:40					
	(*) Effective 15 January until 15 March					(*) Effective 15 January until 15 March								
	(**) Effective 21 March					(**) Effective 21 March								
	(***) Effective 16 March					(***) Effective 16 March								
FROM: ILOILO TO:					TO: ILOILO FROM:									
Puerto Princesa	PR245	Mo/Th(*)	13:50	14:45	Puerto Princesa	PR246	Mo/Th(*)	15:25	16:20	-	-	-	2,688	2,568
	(*) Cancelled until 18 March					(*) Cancelled until 18 March								

Notes:

- One way fares only.
- Insurance Surcharge of PHP300 per sector is applicable to all fare types.
- All fares are exclusive of government tax.
- Discounted fares (i.e., Child, Infant, Student, Golden Years, Military) are applicable using Normal Fares only.
- All schedules/fares are subject to change without prior notice.

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Ousted leader wants case decided in the streets

From page A1

Estrada's actions rejecting the judicial system have effectively converted him into an outlaw. In seeking the backing of the masses, which he has in the past manipulated for electoral gain, he is agitating the poor to join him in his rebellion against the judicial system. This has only underlined his contempt for the political system that has allowed him to win the presidency.

He has taunted the court to convict and jail him, portraying himself a victim of political and judicial persecution.

If we examine the record of his trial, however, we'll find that it's the courts that have been the victim of his abuse and that of his lawyers. It's not Estrada who has been the victim of an alleged conspiracy to deny him justice and a fair trial.

In provoking the court to convict him, Estrada is actually baiting it to confirm his reckless accusation that he is being stampeded to jail.

He is looking for an incident that would trigger the sympathy of the masses and send them into an orgy of violence in the streets.

He wants a repeat of his arrest last April which provoked demonstrations from the urban poor and which built up to the four-day rally at Edsa culminating in the attack on Malacañang on May 1.

The anniversary of the mayhem is approaching, and Estrada's vicious and relentless attack on the judicial system is a prelude to what he hopes to be the triggering event for another mass rising not only against the judicial system and the sitting government itself.

This time, the agitation comes from Estrada, the outlaw. Sooner than later, we will know whether Estrada's incitement for lawlessness will gain as wide a support as the May 1 rising.

Political test

His pushing for a political showdown over his cases—outside the pale of the judicial system—will test not only his capacity to mobilize people on the banner of lawlessness but also the maturity of our people to defend legal ways of resolving dispute.

More importantly, it will test the resolve of the courts and the government to defend the integrity of the judicial system and the capacity of the government to enforce the notion of conflict of resolution within the legal framework.

Estrada is not a madman gone berserk in the ordinary sense of the word. If he were, the solution would be to put him in a straitjacket to control his violent spasms.

As a former president, Estrada believes he is entitled to dignified treatment. He has sought to be treated not just as an ordinary citizen but as a privileged person to whom the rules of the penal system do not apply.

He seeks a special set of rules for himself, not enjoyed by ordinary citizens although the law calls for equal treatment of all those facing criminal charges.

His detention in the Veterans Memorial Medical Center is an extraordinary privilege that belies his accusation he is not being treated with dignity.

Flash point

There is a dangerous flash point that could ignite a showdown that Estrada hopes would provoke his constituency into rampaging in the streets.

If, for example, the Sandiganbayan orders him to appear for trial and he refuses, this may force the sheriff and police to lift him bodily to court. Such an incident could spark disorder. This is how close we are to a violent confrontation that Estrada is recklessly promoting.

If the Sandiganbayan and the government succumb to the pressure seeking to allow him to go abroad, in the effort to buy domestic peace, it will mean the triumph of lawlessness as a way to extract political concessions and worse, to escape a judicial solution of his criminal cases.

It will open the way to extra-judicial ways of deciding cases and it will make politics the ultimate arbiter of disputes lodged in the judicial system.

The initiative of political leaders to resort to "parliamentary diplomacy" as a means to avoid a bloody showdown over this impasse created by Estrada betrays their effort to avoid violence.

The party leaders are seeking a compromise. Their initiative reportedly calls for more concessions from the Sandiganbayan and the government and none at all from Estrada.

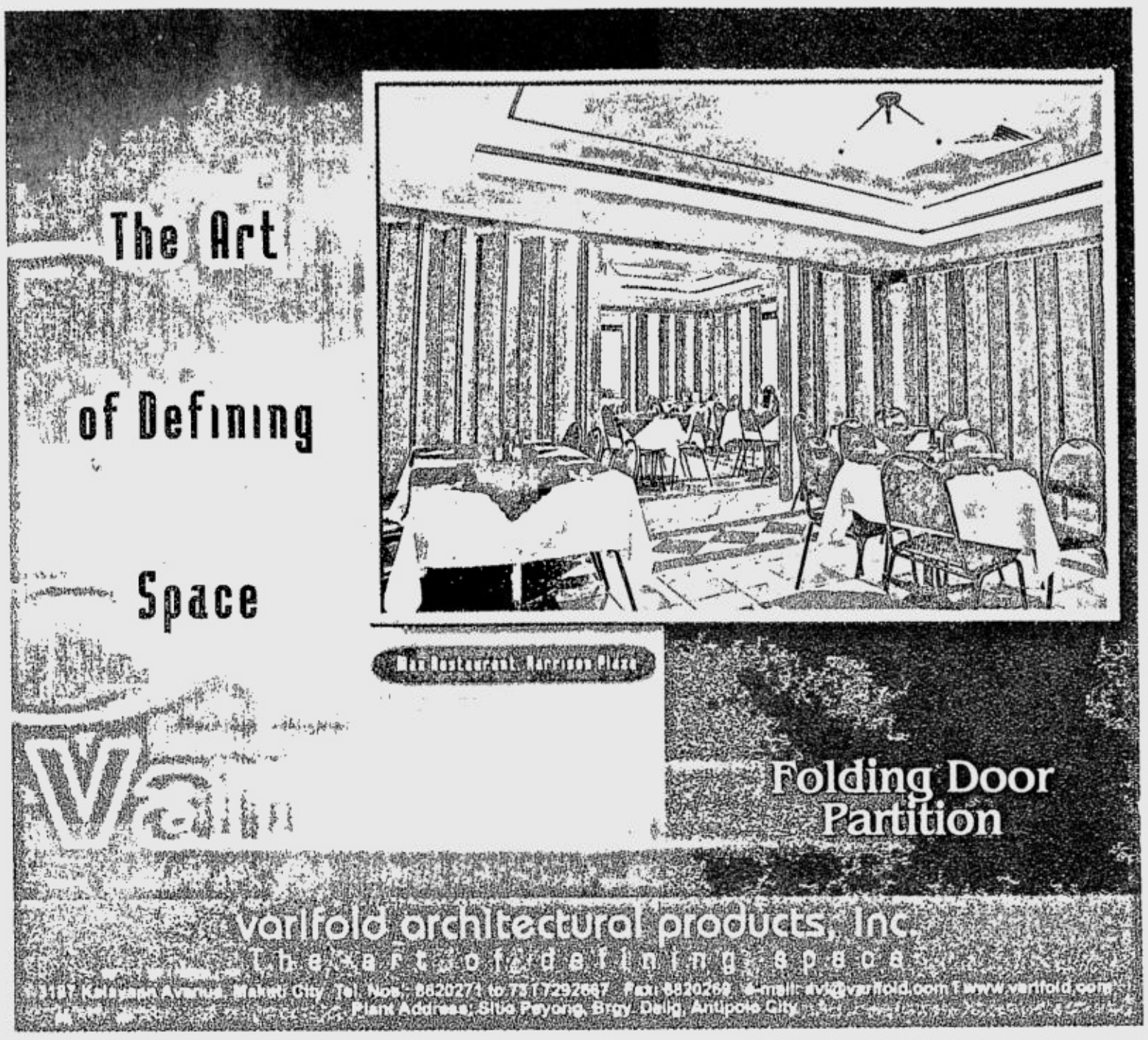
The published points of the initiative are a formula for the capitulation by the government and the judicial system to the demands of a political outlaw who has no respect for institutions and who has brandished the weapon of possible mass violence if his demands are not granted.

The appeasement of Estrada is more important to the power brokers in the interest of domestic peace than the integrity of the judicial system and the credibility of government.

In the end, such a compromise will not buy peace. It will encourage further political lawlessness.

In playing his card of defying the system, Estrada has highlighted the hoodlum culture running just underneath the surface of his presidency.

Defying the system has become the principal weapon of his political battle to evade a judicial decision on his criminal cases.



Solons chide Estrada for GMA 'snub'

From page A1

Senator Arroyo said Estrada's decision not to face Ms Macapagal was in "contrast with the chivalry of (former Senator) Ninoy Aquino."

He recalled how Aquino, then confined at the Philippine Heart Center while needing an immediate heart bypass operation, graciously welcomed then First Lady Imelda Marcos.

Consummate courtesy

"Ninoy, who had a death sentence hanging over his head, received the First Lady with consummate courtesy," Arroyo said.

It was at that visit that Imelda told the opposition leader that she would ask her husband to allow him to be operated on abroad.

That very same night, Aquino was able to leave for the United States. After the heart bypass, he went into exile.

Supporters of Estrada are seeking exile for him to defuse the political tension caused by his decision to fire his lawyers and to question the integrity of the country's justice system. Others want him to leave for knee surgery in the United States.

They have warned of another uprising should Estrada is not allowed to leave.

By attempting to visit Estrada, the President blinked first, according to Bulacan Rep. Willie B. Villarama, Ms Macapagal's chief of staff when she was the Vice President.

"For me, there's nothing wrong in blinking as long as it's good for the country," Villarama told the INQUIRER.

Villarama, a member of the pro-administration Aksyon Demokratiko, said Ms Macapagal would be damned by her critics for trying to reconcile with Estrada.

"Her opponents will say she is wishy-washy but for the level-headed Filipinos, her gesture will be appreciated," said Villarama, one of nine pro-administration members of the House, who had wanted to file a resolution asking the President to send Estrada into exile to avert a political crisis.

Villarama said the President should push through with seeing Estrada.

"She should not be afraid to meet with Erap," he said.

But Sen. Francis Pangilinan said reports that the President had tried to visit Estrada could be "perceived as interfering in a purely judicial matter."

"It would be best for the President to just leave it to the judiciary to resolve the current developments in the Estrada case," Pangilinan said.

He underscored that the judiciary, particularly the Supreme Court, had "been a source of stability and sobriety for a country divided by political turmoil."

"As such, the judiciary's independence and integrity should be upheld and defended," Pangilinan said.

Ploy

Opposition Rep. Didagen Dilangalen said the President's attempt to visit her predecessor was part of her "political ploy."

"Whatever she does, is always suspect" to the opposition, Dilangalen said.

The militant fisher folk group Pamalakaya assailed the President for trying to visit Estrada in his detention cell.

In a press statement, Pamalakaya said the President's move to reconcile with Estrada was "offensive, contemptuous and nasty."

The group said Ms Macapagal's aborted visit stemmed from her desperation to score a major political settlement with the restive Estrada camp.

"The government is so eager to strike a major deal with the Estrada clique to the extent of playing cameo roles to Estrada's own political sideshows. The President played her bit roles to the hilt to please the deposed camp and to stop the has-been-actor from harassing her camp," Pamalakaya said.

Gonzalez said Ms Macapagal should just leave Estrada's fate to the courts.

He said the President went out of her way to visit her predecessor because of the "back-channeling efforts" of four senior congressional leaders to defuse the political situation.

Speaker Jose de Venecia and Senators Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Blas Ople and Edgardo Angara are pushing for "parliamentary diplomacy" to solve the Estrada problem. They want the Sandiganbayan to allow Estrada to leave for medical treatment abroad.

While he is pushing for a way out of the Estrada problem, De Venecia attacked the former President for attacking the country's judicial system.

"How can a former President set the example for the Filipino youth and the Filipino people (when he said) he (cannot get) justice from the Sandiganbayan and the Supreme Court?" De Venecia said in Bolinao, Pangasinan, Saturday.

Judicial process

He said the government could help Estrada if he returned to the judicial process.

"We must persuade him to return to the process because he will be assured of a fair and just trial. He should hire lawyers. (Only then) can we consider other options," he said.

But if Estrada refuses, "then we cannot help him," De Venecia said. "The Sandiganbayan will just proceed with the trial. The natural course will happen."

"Even if he defeated me in the 1998 elections, I feel genuinely sorry for him and I'm praying for him. But he must respect the Philippine judicial system. Nobody is above the law," De Venecia added.

In San Jose, Antique, Drilon also scored Estrada for attacking the judicial system to "generate sympathy" from the people.

Calling the trial of Estrada a "test of our justice system and the rule of law," Drilon said Estrada's continued criticism of the justice system was a "clear attempt to erode our people's confidence in our system of justice."

"We cannot hope for genuine peace and progress without the guarantee of freedom and justice in our country," Drilon added.

Quick-fix solutions

He chided moves in Congress to allow Estrada to go into exile in the United States.

"Unfortunately, politicians in their desire for quick-fix solutions to the problem in the name of stability have interfered through various resolutions asking that the former President go into exile," Drilon said.

In San Pablo City in Laguna, Fr. Rene Eriga, president of the Presbyterian Council of the San Pablo Diocese, said Estrada's attacks on the Sandiganbayan and Supreme Court showed the he was a "desperate man looking for scapegoats."

PlunderWatch spokesperson Fr. Jose Dizon asked the President "to show to the Filipino people that the interest of justice is more important than her 2004 election bid." ***With reports from Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; and Romulo O. Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

American wants to swap himself for Ediborah

From page A1

province, said Kis "will complicate the situation here."

"We don't want another hostage be taken by the Abu Sayyaf," Deedrick said as he expressed surprise at the proposal.

"I thought he was just joking, but when I saw his determination, we just advised him to return to the US or better yet take a vacation in Cebu or elsewhere," the American officer added.

Kis, who holds a degree in modern language from the Villanova University, said a "close relative" of Yap must agree to the "exchange of hostages" and that no ransom should be paid for his release.

"I will turn myself over to the Abu Sayyaf only after Ediborah is released safe with her family. I pledge not to attempt any escape from the Abu Sayyaf and in the event of my injury or death, I will not hold the US government or Philippine government responsible in any way," he added.

KIS meets Yap's mother Fatima and youngest son Lawrence William. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Kis met with David Pamaran, Yap's elder brother, who accompanied him to the 18th IB headquarters here to seek the American soldiers' approval of his offer.

Pamaran described the offer as "very overwhelming to us." But he said he turned it down for fear that it would only compound the problem in Basilan.

"It is an indication that many are concerned, just the thought that an American coming from nowhere, offering his life to save a stranger," Pamaran said.

Yap's mother Fatima said she was happy with the offer, but "thanks for the concern (and) I don't think it will help us."

She said she cried when she unexpectedly had a foreign visitor expressing sincere help for her daughter.

"I admire his aspiration, his noble deed in helping us, but I don't think the government will allow it," Fatima said in mixed Tausug and Bisaya.

Right mind

Kis assured the Yaps that he was in his right mind.

"I don't have any history of mental illnesses, never done like this before, but I'm aware of the risk I'm facing," he said.

He said he "accidentally read" in the INQUIRER about Yap's fate, "and I got interested and I pity, especially with the (situation of her) children and her old mother Fatima."

Yap, a nurse at the Don Jose Torres Memorial Hospital, has five children and is the sole breadwinner of the family. Her husband, who had left them, is believed to be working in a mining area in Cotabato.

Kis said he had nothing to lose with his offer because he was still single. "I got no parents, except my brother Greg and sister Nina in the States, and they will probably become upset and worried with my decision."

He said his initial mission in going to the Philippines was to save Eusebio Lagrido, 16, of Bohol, who is suffering from leukemia. He arrived in Manila on Jan. 31 and went to Bohol on Feb. 17 to see Lagrido.

"I met Eusebio in 1999 in Bohol when I was a tourist then and participated in an anti-abortion rally that almost killed me," Kis said. He did not elaborate.

He said he also helped two women—Leonila Ballesteros, 50, who has a cataract; and Juana Absaide, 55, who has tuberculosis—from Tagbilaran City. He brought them to the Cebu Doctors Hospital in Cebu City last month.

Kis said he already tapped the Max Foundation in the United States for the treatment of Lagrido's ailment, but added that "it's quite difficult to work on his visa here."

Visa problem

The American's Philippine visa is due to expire on March 31, but his plane ticket indicates a return flight to the United States on April 29. "I'm going to extend my stay here," Kis said. "My worst fear is if the Philippine government suddenly would not renew my visa."

Kis explained that he preferred helping Ediborah because of her present situation, considering that "all the attention is now focused on the Tribe Mission couple, the Burnhams."

Martin and Gracia Burnhams, both Americans, were abducted along with 19 other tourists and resort personnel by the Abu Sayyaf in February last year from the Dos Palmas Island Resort in Palawan. Only the Burnhams and Yap remain in captivity.

Southern Command (Southcom) authorities based in Zamboanga City yesterday said they had pinpointed the location of the hostages based on information provided by US spy planes.

The search has been narrowed down to a small area in Basilan, Capt. Noel Detoyato, Southcom spokesperson for operations, told defense reporters based in Manila.

Sampinit area

He said government troops were focusing on two 12-square-kilometer areas "within the Sampinit complex and its environs."

At the same time, Detoyato denied reports that the main body of the Abu Sayyaf had been sighted in Sulu, saying these were meant to mislead pursuing government forces.

"However, we have troops there to verify these reports," he said.

Southcom chief Lt. Gen. Roy Cimatu, in another interview with defense reporters, refused to give more details about the participation of US Orion spy planes.

Detoyato also said there was no unmanned US spy plane being used during the Balikatan. "What we have are Orions because of the Balikatan. What they furnish us is complemented by human intelligence," he said.

Despite the refusal of the Yaps to accept his offer of an exchange of hostages, Kis said he would be available anytime.

"If the Yaps decided to avail of my help, even if I'm already in the States, they can always call me," he said. ***With a report from Martin P. Marfil in Manila***

Now . . .

From page A1

installment of President Macapagal-Arroyo's emotional appeal, which repeats her call for support for her administration.

Radio stations yesterday started to broadcast the plug, titled "Ina ng Bayan: Huwag Pahirapan, Tulungan (Mother of the Nation: Don't torment, but help instead)."

Like the first installment, which came out last week, Ms Macapagal ended her message with this movie-worthy line: "*Kailangan ko kayo* (I need you)."

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the second plug was part of a series conceptualized by Ms Macapagal's private publicist Dante Ang, publisher of the Manila Times. Tiglao, the incoming press secretary, said he didn't know how many more installments were in the pipeline.

"It's an effort to touch base with the people and to reach out to them," Tiglao said.

In the second commercial, the President started by saying, in Filipino: "It is painful to receive criticisms and attacks against my family, which are without basis."

"I accept these as part of my job and burden as President. What's important is that I fulfill my duties and do my obligations right for the country," the President said.

As in the first commercial, the second showed her at a paper-laden desk, projecting the image of a leader immersed in heavy work.

The taping was held at the National Broadcasting (Channel 4) building on Visayas Avenue, Quezon City, on Saturday morning, before she boarded a helicopter at the nearby Veterans Memorial Medical Center for Batangas.

A Palace insider said the President did four takes to get the second plug right.

"As mother of the nation, I will continue to put up houses, create jobs, deliver education and improve the lives of more than 75 million Filipinos," she said.

What the country needs is "to move forward not backward," she added.

"We need speed, not a slowdown. We need unity, not discord," she said. The country "will go far only if we help each other."

Slay 'brains' still unknown

From page A1

Three Baguio youths—Raymund Testado, 23; Bong Sison, 21; and Ronald Domalina, 18, alleged members of the "Magic 5," a breakaway faction of the Samahang Ilocano fraternity—are on trial in Villasis, Pangasinan, for the kidnapping.

The trial has stalled because the judge was reassigned to a Metro Manila court.

In a publication marking its 49th founding anniversary, the CIDG claimed it had already neutralized the Testado kidnap-for-ransom gang. (The suspects are also facing car theft charges before the regional trial court here.)

But the NBI regional office here said the Leung-Tingal case was "definitely not a closed case as far as we are concerned."

Said lawyer Rickson Chiong: "The investigation of the case is going on and I am personally following up some leads." For a criminal case to be considered solved or closed, "a suspect has to be arrested, then tried and convicted by a court of law," Chiong added.

Charles and his wife Lota Leung said they were "shocked, very disappointed" with the CIDG report. "How can they say that the case is already solved? They have yet to arrest two John Does and there are still no convictions. They have yet to tag the mastermind or masterminds of the crime," they said.

Teresita Ferrer-Tingal, mother of Tihani, said the same thing. Contacted by phone, the Mangaldan, Pangasinan, native urged the NBI to "pursue the case and send the brains of the kidnapping and killing of (Giancarlo and Tihani) to jail. We want justice for Tihan (her late daughter's nickname). *Di pa tapos ang kaso*."

Supt. Generoso Bonifacio, CIDG head for the Cordillera, explained that at his level, "once suspects in a particular case are arrested and charges have been filed before the court, the case is already considered solved."

He did say his office was "still conducting discreet investigation of some leads provided to us by some people," but he did not elaborate.

Jealousy angle

When the news of the kidnapping spread, "the Betans met in response to our call for prayers for the safe return of Gian and Tihani," Charles Leung told the INQUIRER.

"The Betans had several meetings. In their view, the tragic events which led to the kidnapping and killing of Gian were either a simple case of kidnapping for ransom, an offshoot of a frat war, (or) a love angle and a love triangle," he said.

But fraternity members, as well as some police investigators, did not buy the kidnap-for-ransom story "because it occurred on a Friday with the families (of the victims) not being afforded the proper time to raise the ransom. The kidnapping could not have been done by amateurs."

The campus rivalry angle "couldn't have provided sufficient motivation for either resorting to kidnapping for ransom or the killing because in many instances, the Betans were friendly with many members of Pusoy (another UP Baguio organization). One Betan even had a Pusoy girlfriend." (Tingal was a former girlfriend of someone said to be a Pusoy member.)

But Charles said he and his wife were "inclined to believe the jealousy angle," saying "this one concerned Gian's alleged relationship with a former officer of the Beta Sigma Ladies Chapter," the sorority associated with Beta Sigma.

The woman, who is in her late 20s, is the estranged wife of a Baguio entrepreneur who is also an alumnus of UP-Baguio. She once taught at the Philippine Military Academy here, PMA sources said. (The Leungs disclosed the woman's identity but asked the INQUIRER to withhold it as well as that of her estranged husband's. This reporter tried but failed to contact the woman.)

During one Beta Sigma meeting, the woman allegedly told the Betans: "If this is what happened to Gian, I may be next" and that her mother-in-law, not her husband, was "capable of ordering the kidnapping and murder of Gian."

Late last year, a former Beta Sigma officer disclosed to the INQUIRER that "in the subsequent meetings of the fraternity, it was established that the woman had asked to be separated from her husband and he suspected the reason behind this was a number of 'involvements' she had, including her alleged relationship with Gian."

He added that he had talked to the woman two days after the bodies were found in Pampanga. "She told me her mother-in-law had accused her once of having extramarital relationships. Her estranged husband must have aired his troubles to his mother who returned with haste to the country sometime in October 2000. Using her past contacts, most probably with the NBI, she had her daughter-in-law's friends investigated, Gian included. But it appeared they were not able to establish Gian's involvement with his (sorority) sis beyond that of a platonic relationship."

An NBI agent had admitted to the Leungs that a background check on Giancarlo had been conducted, but there were no NBI records on the matter.

Finding justice

The Leungs said they have never given up hope that they will find justice. "We're each other's bedrock and that's a great deal of strength," Lota said.

She said they "have accepted the death of our child, which is, by the way, every parent's worst nightmare. But letting go? Not until the case is finally resolved."

"And our saving grace? Maybe our belief in life after death, that (Gian) is there waiting for us," she said.

Every time there is a full moon, the Leungs are "reminded of the tragedy because Gian was kidnapped that night when the moon was full."

But the pain eases "with the sight of several things (at the Leung residence on Laubach Road here) like Gian's guitar, his pictures, the photographs he took, and the blankets with the teddy bear design," among other items.

But, Lota added, these things "also tell us to strive to bear the unbearable and fight for justice no matter what it will cost us."

SPORTS

Editor Al S. Mendoza ◉ Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Mangulat

BASKETBALL: Big Ten Basketball Tournament, First Round at 7 a.m., Quarterfinals at 10 a.m., ACC Tournament, Championship at 5 p.m. on ESPN on ESPN

This Week in the NBA at 12:30 p.m. on CNN

TENNIS: ATP Franklin Templeton Classic, Semifinal at 9 a.m. (r), Finals at 9 p.m. on Star Sports

ROMY HOMILLADA

GIBSON punches the air after topping the 87th RP Open in wire-to-wire style.

CASINO FILIPINO EVENT

Gibson's 73 wins RP Open by 4 shots

THE WINNERS

Rick Gibson (Can)	68-69-73-73=minus 5
Robert Jacobson (USA)	74-74-68-67=minus 1
Pablo del Olmo (Mex)	72-72-76-68=even
Tony Lascuna (Phl)	71-70-75-73=plus 1
Anthony Kang (Kor)	74-69-73-73=plus 1

By Al S. Mendoza

CANADIAN Rick Gibson scored a rare wire-to-wire victory in the Casino Filipino 87th Philippine Open yesterday but not after bucking a mental baggage that he treated all day long like the bubonic plague.

Weirdly, the mental baggage did not even involve anyone carrying a golf club and just about ready to topple him. Instead, it was his six-shot margin going into yesterday's last round at Wack Wack East that kept bugging him.

"I kept thinking about it that at the back of my mind, things weren't that easy to control anymore," said Gibson. "I had to check my pulse from time to time, and make deep breaths to ease the pressure off my chest most of the way."

It became a case of one fighting no one but himself. A classic example of a golf round in which you grapple with your own mortality and not with the entire field.

Gibson was not only trying to stash away a perceived victory 24 hours before tee off time. Mercifully, he was more trying to survive than securing a niche in Open lore.

The 40-year-old son of Victoria licked the plague only when he got into his 72nd green carrying a four-shot margin over a title-pretender who sneaked in literally from the bushes.

"I glanced at the leaderboard when I got to the 15th and I noticed I was still up by five," said Gibson. "But it was not until I got into the final green that I knew I was finally going to win it."

He parred the par-4 18th after blasting from the front bunker to within seven feet for a closing 1-over-73.

That was his 15th par on a day marked by the most defensive golf ever dished out at the fabled Wack Wack East that when sportswriters told Gibson to reconstruct his round, he said in jest: "Uh-oh, we're gonna go hole-by-hole to my boring round?"

When Gibson was through and he got

GIBSON'S73/A22

Give it to Gibson

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

ANOTHER Open is over. Bye sadness. Hello gladness.

But, what else is new?

Sad once more are our own pros? Because they missed winning the big one once more?

I'm not surprised. Losers are supposed to be naturally sad or there's something wrong in them.

But do our own pros, most of them anyway, really have the right to sulk?

I guess not.

For one, the opposition has become that tough. For another, our pros—most of them anyway—do not really have the correct attitude toward their chosen profession, which is that they are full-time professional golfers.

For years now, I've been observing them with my eagle-eye stance. Truth is, I've written about it a lot of times already—that most of them treat their career half-heartedly.

They love to complain about the lack of tournaments on home soil instead of toil in the sun to hone up their game in the lean months.

They love to caddy for their sponsors as if that's not a very undignified way to their calling as golf pros.

They love to solicit money to finance their golf, oftentimes looking more like beggars, if not buggers, than pros.

You decide to turn pro, give dignity to yourself, if not to the game, by carrying it like a true badge of honor that it really is.

I can palm out a few of our pros who treat their career the proper way. They include, among others, Frankie Miñoza, Danny Zarate, Ramon Brobio, Richie Sinfuego, Rodrigo Cuello, Gerald Rosales, Carito Villaroman and Tony Lascuna. These guys really work on their game all year round—tournament or no tournament. They spend hours practicing, grooving their swing, making themselves physically fit with almost a daily spartan training regimen. Miñoza jogs daily and lifts weights; he does not call off a practice round when rains pour in once he's teed off.

Was Miñoza sad that he bungled his Open bid after that 81 on Saturday?

Maybe a little. Warriors are humans, too, you know.

But I can assure you he's perfectly fine. He has learned to handle both success and failure. As proof, Miñoza did not balk when sportscaster non pareil Ed Picson sent out an invitation for Frankie to be interviewed on TV. At first, Miñoza hesitated.

"Do I still deserved to be interviewed after my 81?" he said.

I said, why not? People would love to see their idol on TV, good round or not. Miñoza will always be Miñoza, 81 or 61 attached to his scorecard. One bad round doesn't a villain make. Heroes are remembered for the totality of their records.

So look, glad was Canadian Rick Gibson yesterday after finally nailing down his first RP Open in eight tries. Indeed, it's hello gladness for Rick since, knowing him, he knows that that felling can last forever. The 13-year Manila resident from Victoria, married to former actress Josephine Garcia, has had his own share of ups and downs. They came to him again the last two days at Wack Wack: From a day of patience Saturday to a day of bliss Sunday.

You richly deserve all the accolades, Rick.

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Gibson's 73 wins RP . . .

From page A21

to the climax of his second straight 73 in as many days, he said: "Relief!"

None of the expected final-day drama characteristic of past Open battles marked Gibson's final-day 73 as his round was as monotonous as a large white wall of a living room bereft of paintings.

"I wasn't thinking of birdies with that kind of margin," he said. "I couldn't sleep the night before. I kept thinking too of the long putts to fall the next morning."

Mostly, they didn't fall even as he saved par five times, including one on 9 when his approach ran past the green and hit the short wall of a gutter of the O.B. line, the ball bouncing back to the back of the green.

Still, that 73 was big enough to give him his first Open in his eighth try, winning by four shots with a 5-under-par total of 283. His previous rounds were 68-69-73.

American Robert Jacobson stunned the field with a 67 in a follow-up to his Round 3 68, completing a resurrection that saw him climb to second place after making the cut at 152 on his 78-74.

Mexico's Pablo del Olmo, who led last year's first round of the Open, rescued third with a 68=288, easing out Korean Anthony Kang (73=289) and Filipino Tony Lascuna (73=289) who shared fourth.

Low amateur honors

The next best-placed Filipino after Lascuna was Angelo Que, who retained low amateur honors with a 72=292, good for a tie for seventh with American Greg Hanrahan (73=292).

Only Lascuna and Que from among 60 or so Filipinos made it to this year's Top 10.

2000 champion Gerald Rosales (74=295) was tied for 12th, former Uratex winner Elmer Salvador (72=279) was in a three-man logjam at 20th and Frankie Miñoza (75=298) was deadlocked at 23rd with four others that included countryman Richard Sinfuego (70=295).

The 42-year-old Miñoza took his defeat good-naturedly a day after he bombed out with an 81.

"Not for anything but the tournament will serve as my warm-up for the Japan Tour," said Miñoza, who will leave at 2 p.m. today for the Kagushima Open offering a total of $800,000, with the winner pocketing close to $200,000.

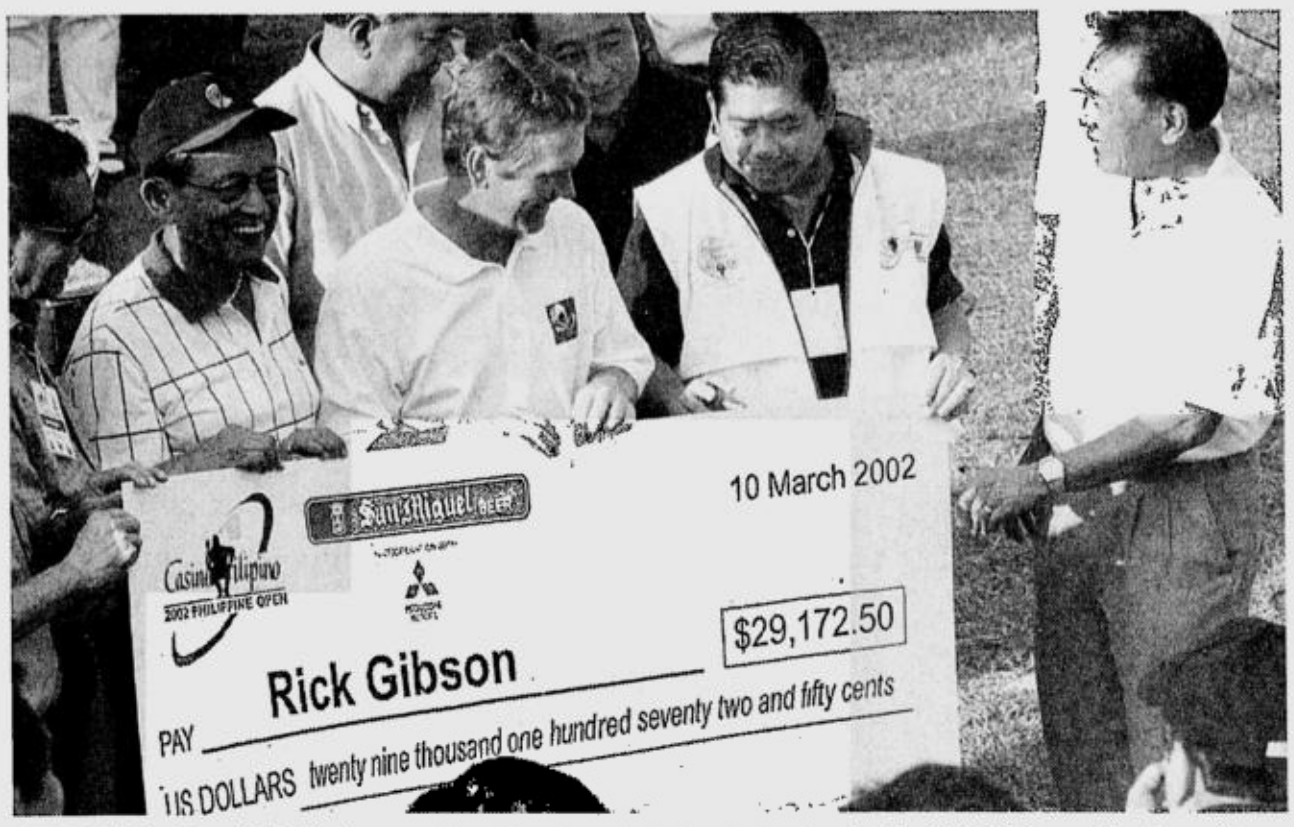
"I'm glad for Rick (Gibson)," said Miñoza, who earned $2,030 from the total purse of $175,000. "His win will surely boost his morale as he heads back to the Japan Tour after an absence of four years or three years?"

Gibson, who was merely reintroducing himself to Philippine golf after having already won the RP Masters and the PGA championship a while back, will leave today for New Delhi to join the India Open next week.

"With this win, I hope to reestablish myself in the Asian Tour," said the 5-foot-8 Gibson, whose return was marked by a drastic change in diet marked by a heavy meat intake and less of carbohydrates. "I'm doing weights, too, and I'm down to 155 pounds. But I guess this week, with all that pressure out there, I must have lost five pounds."

Other scores:

Anthony Kang (Kor)	74-69-73-73=289
Tony Lascuna (Phi)	71-70-75-73=289
Danny Chia (Mas)	73-73-72-73=291
Greg Hanrahan (USA)	70-68-81-73=292
Angelo Que (A) (Phi)	69-73-78-72=292
Kang Wook-soon (Kor)	75-71-71-76=293
Chris Kamin (USA)	78-73-73-70=294
Sushi Ishigaki (Jpn)	73-73-76-72=294
Gerald Rosales (Phi)	74-73-74-74=295
Mo Joong-kyung (Kor)	73-73-75-74=295
Hsu Mong-nan (Twn)	70-75-79-71=295
Chawalit Plaphol (Tha)	72-70-74-80=296
Amandeep Johl (Ind)	74-75-75-72=296
Jim Johnson (USA)	72-75-76-73=296
Kim Sang-ki (Kor)	69-75-77-75=296
Tatsuya Shiraishi (Jpn)	73-76-74-73=296
Elmer Salvador (Phi)	75-75-75-72=297
Joon Choi (Kor)	74-75-74-74=297
Kyi Hla Han (Myn)	70-78-77-72=297
Kim Sung-yoon (Kor)	74-72-81-71=298
Franki Miñoza (Phi)	70-72-81-75=298
Saneh Saengsui (Tha)	71-74-78-75=298
Richie Sinfuego (Phi)	72-77-79-70=296
Tarry Pilkadaris (Aus)	73-77-72-76=296



GIBSON (third from left), displays a replica of the champion's check after topping the 87th RP Open. Also shown (from left) are NGAP president Rod Feliciano, former President Fidel V. Ramos, Pagcor's Manny Roxas and MMDA chair and Wack Wack President Ben Abalos. ROMY HOMILLADA

2 Pinoy boxers enter finals

BAKU, Azerbaijan—Team Caltex Philippines sustained its momentum in the medals race after Harry Tanamor and Violito Payla assured themselves of silvers in the Prof. Anwar Chwodhry Cup on Saturday here.

Tanamor and Payla, two of the youngest and promising boxers in the national pool, won their semifinal bouts in the 48 and 51 kilograms divisions, respectively, to barge into the finals of this tough 27-nation slugfest at the Olympic Sports Center.

Tanamor, 23, subdued local bet Abiyev Djeyhun, 21-14, while Payla, also 23 and from Calaanan P.N. Roa, Cagayan de Oro, pummeled Valid Sherif of Tunisia, 19-6.

Game plan will be the same when Tanamor goes up against muscle-bound Abdulkadir Kochak of Turkey and Payla tackles tall but quick Murahashi Kaori of Japan.

The other members of the team—supported by the Philippine Sports Commission, Pacific Heights, Revicon and Adidas—Vincent Palicte, Anthony Igusquiza, Roel Laguna and Romeo Brin lost their medals bid due to poor and biased officiating.

It's Agassi vs Spaniard for crown

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona—Top-seeded Andre Agassi eased past seventh-seed Xavier Malisse 6-4, 6-4 to reach the final of the $400,000 Scottsdale Classic on Saturday.

On Sunday, Agassi will play unseeded Spaniard Juan Balcells who serve-and-volleyed German Rainer Schuettler off the court for a 6-3, 6-1 victory in just 52 minutes in their semifinal.

Agassi relied on his punishing groundstrokes to get past the dangerous 21-year-old Belgian shotmaker.

"One of the worst things you can do is play better than you have to," said Agassi after another workmanlike effort.

"I think a guy like Xavier is an incredible shot-maker. In many cases, the better you play, the better he hits, so you really have to pick your moments. Today, this was a solid match from start to finish."

After Agassi got the early service break, Malisse broke back in the eighth game to level the set 4-4, but double-faulted the next game away to put the American ahead 5-4.

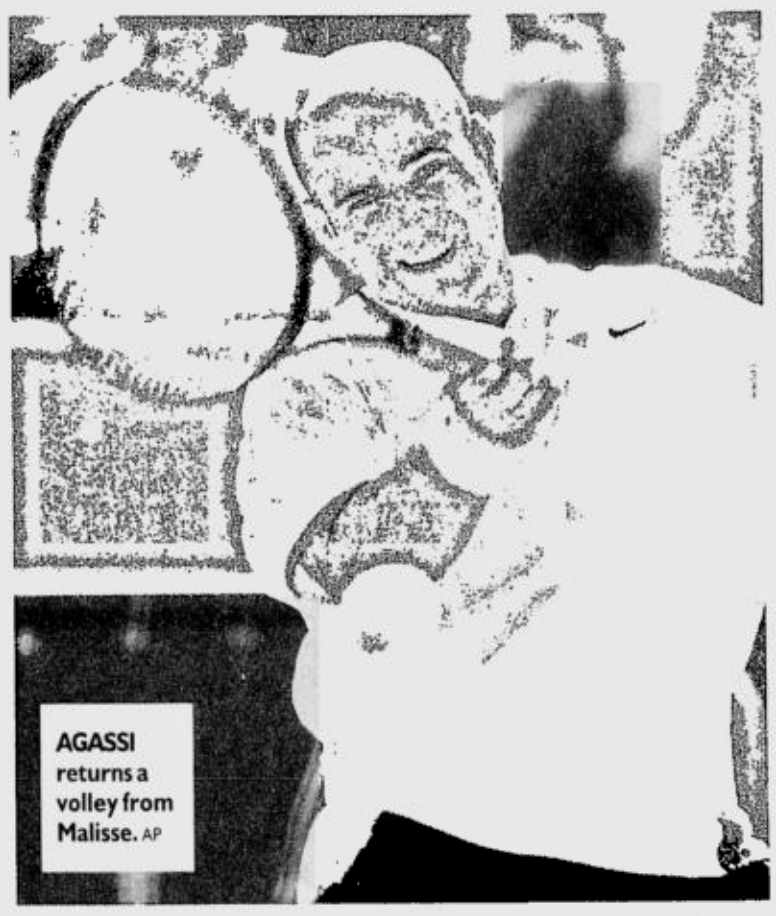
Agassi erased a break point with a service winner and an ace before a forehand pass gave him the opening set.

Both traded service breaks in to open the second.

Malisse, however, double-faulted away the seventh game, putting Agassi ahead 4-3.

At 5-4, he closed out the match with a love game.

Against Balcells, Agassi will be attempting to become only the eighth player in the Open era to win 50 singles titles. ***Reuters***



AGASSI returns a volley from Malisse. AP

Hingis, Seles rip rivals

INDIAN WELLS, California—Second seed Martina Hingis and fourth seed Monica Seles were at their ruthless best on Saturday, strolling to straight set victories at the Indian Wells Masters.

A resurgent Hingis, who has reached the finals of three of the four tournaments she has played this season winning two, barely worked up a sweat in the desert sun as she overwhelmed Croatian qualifier Silvija Talaja 6-0, 6-1 in a second round clash that lasted just 41 minutes.

Seles's performance was as nearly as economical and perhaps even more impressive as she rolled into the fourth round with 6-0, 6-3 win over Slovakia's Martina Sucha, who claimed her first career title earlier this year and reached the round of 16 at the Australian Open. ***Reuters***

Express, Beermen trip foes

By June Navarro

GAME TOMORROW: (Philsports)
6 p.m.—Sta. Lucia vs Selecta-RP

ANTIPOLO CITY—Tim Moore and Jermaine Walker spearheaded a scoring splurge for three quarters as Federal Express whipped Alaska, 83-69, last night in the PBA Governors Cup at the Ynares Center here.

Moore was a major force on the floor while Walker shone with his superb outside shooting to lift the Express to their third win in six starts.

The awesome duo combined for 51 points after three quarters, five points less than the Aces' total output at that stage, to give the Express a lot of breathing room at the start of the final period.

Mario Bennett converted two crucial putbacks in the last minute to carry San Miguel Beer to a 76-72 win over Shell in the second game.

The Beermen improved to 2-3, while handing the Turbo Chargers their fourth defeat against a win to create a three-way tie with Ginebra and Selecta-RP Team at the bottom of the standings.

Alaska threatened on Ron Riley's one-handed slam, 62-69, but that was all the Aces could afford to do as Bong Alvarez iced the win for the Express by scoring 10 points including two triples down the stretch.

"If we're going to win against Alaska I told them that we should make a stand. That's exactly what the boys did as we sustained what Moore and Walker had started," said FedEx coach Derrick Pumaren.

Bouncing back from a dismal two-point performance during a losing cause against San Miguel Beer last week, Moore atoned with 28 points, 21 of which came in the first period.

Walker backstopped Moore with 26 points while Alvarez again finished in double figures with 14 points. He had 28 markers against San Miguel.

Riley led the Aces with 20 points, an output not enough to offset the inefficiency of Muntrelle Dobbins.

Scores:

FEDEX 83—Moore 28, Walker 26, Alvarez 14, De Ocampo 5, Codiñera 4, Arboleda 2, Pumaren 2, Billones 0, Simon 0, Bernardo 0.

ALASKA 69—Riley 20, Arigo 13, Gahol 10, Santos 9, Dobbins 8, Lastimosa 5, Allado 4, Yap 0, Newton 0.

Quarters: 30-23, 48-36, 67-56, 83-69.

Derby elims on tomorrow

OFFICIAL entries to Mandaluyong Coliseum's 6th Ucap/TR Phoenix Hammer Jr. 7-Cock Derby must be submitted today (March 11) from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Sponsors of the derby are Sagupaan Super Feeds and Washout Shampoo.

The two-day cockfest, to be hosted by Ucap members Mario Villamor, Tito Reyes, Benjie Lim and Wacky Salud, will have its elimination round tomorrow (March 12). The finals is on Thursday (March 14).

Expected to provide fireworks to the event, aside from the regular Ucap members, are guest participants that include the legendary Nene Araneta, Gov. Ito Ynares, back-to-back NCA Cocker of the Year Jun Santiago, former Sta. Ana Racing Club owner and presently La Loma Cockpit operator Tos Reyes, ex-Mayor Jessie Viceo of Bulacan and 2002 Mandaluyong International 9-Cock Derby champion Henry Tan.

The derby will start at 6 p.m. tomorrow.

On March 19 and 21 is the 7th Ucap/Firebird Anito MB 7-Cock Derby with hotelier sportsman Biboy Enriquez and Palawan's bet Mauro Prieto.

For other inquiries, please contact 531-4003, 531-4005, 534-4110 and 535-2341.

TaylorMade launches club series at Wack Wack

TAYLORMADE, the best performance golf brand in the world today, recently launched its Golf 2002 club series at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club in Mandaluyong City.

Coinciding with the four-day Philippine Open Tournament, the event showcased TaylorMade's premier series such as the 200 Steel, Rescue Series, 300 Series, XR-03 Driver and X-03 Irons. Each of which is designed to develop every golfer's full potential, from a perfected swing to a winning game. True to the TaylorMade principle that "for every player, there is a club."

The launch also marked the start of TaylorMade Demo Tour which will be visiting exclusive tournaments and driving ranges for golfers to try out its Golf 2002 Series. The TaylorMade Demo Tour partners are Canon Philippines, Philippine Airlines, IBM and Salomon.

TaylorMade has been the leader in golf's technological evolution since its inception in 1979. In 1998, the company joined with Adidas Golf, becoming the wholly owned subsidiary of Adidas Salomon AG to being the performance golf brand in the world.

Present during the event were Jason Koh, general manager for TaylorMade Asia-Pacific Region, Ernest Paguia, business unit manager for TaylorMade Adidas Golf, members of the press and special guests.

PSC-POC: How well do they work?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

THIS year, the Philippine Sports Commission and the Philippine Olympic Committee both get the chance to make a push for a respectable showing in the Busan Asian games this September, hoping to erase the stigma of a miserable showing in the Bangkok Asiad four years ago earlier.

In that Bangkok bash, the Philippines, fielding 300 athletes bankrolled by the PSC, landed a disgraceful 21st in the overall standings by winning only one gold medal and narrowly nosing out newcomer Vietnam by just one bronze on a 1-5-12 (gold-silver-bronze) in the medal race. Clearly, nothing has changed.

Through the years, sports has made little progress compared to the decades when the Philippine Amateur Athletic federation was still running its affairs. Recall that it was during the time of the PAAF, most specifically during the 1950s, that the Philippines attained monumental achievements in the field of sports.

In 1951 when Asia launched its first region-wide sporting competitions with the hosting of the Asian Games in New Delhi, the Philippines won five gold medals, three in the swimming (Jack Cayco in the 200-meter breaststroke, Artemio Salamat in the 100m backstroke and the 4 x 100m relay team), one in basketball and another in athletics (Andres Franco in the high jump).

When the Philippines hosted the Games in May 1954, Filipino athletes posted their most successful stint in Asiad history by capturing 14 gold medals, with basketball winning, as expected. The other stirring triumphs came from boxing, which snared five golds (flyweight Ernesto Sajo, bantamweight Alejandro Ortuoste, lightweight Celedonio Espinosa, welterweight Ernesto Porto and middleweight Vicente Tunacao). Four golds were won by swimming (Haydee Coloso, 100m freestyle and butterfly events; Jocelyn Von Giese, 100m backstroke; and Parsons Nabiula, 200m butterfly), while four others came from shooting (Albert Einsiedel, smallbore rifle prone; Martin Gison, rapid fire pistol; Adolfo "Chito" Feliciano, smallbore rifle, 3 positions; and Hernando Castelo, free pistol). However, Japan wound up the overall champion.

Also in 1954, the Philippine team, sparked by Carlos Loyzaga, Lauro Mumar, Mariano Tolentino and Antonio Genato, won third place at the 2nd World Basketball Championship in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to register an amazing feat no Philippine quintet would ever accomplish in this or future generation.

The Philippines preserved her respectable standings in the Asian Games until 1962 in Jakarta where the Filipinos' gold production dipped to seven and we won the basketball gold for the last time. It was also in 1962 when the World Basketball Championship scheduled in the Philippines was cancelled because the government then under President Diosdado Macapagal refused to grant entry visas to players and officials of the team from Yugoslavia, a socialist country. As a result, the FIBA (International Basketball Federation) withdrew the world championship from the Philippines; the country was banned from the next world tournament and slapped a fine of $2,000 on the Basketball Association of the Philippines, then headed by Sen. Ambrosio Padilla.

In the old sports set-up, the president of the PAAF, forerunner of the PSC, was also the president of the National Olympic Committee, now the POC. Incidentally, the PAAF president did not receive any salary because it is prohibited by the International Olympic Committee. Only the PAAF secretary-treasurer received compensation for his administrative work.

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled By Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: Big Ten Basketball Tournament, First Round at 7 a.m., Quarterfinals at 10 a.m., ACC Tournament, Championship at 5 p.m. on ESPN on ESPN
This Week in the NBA at 12:30 p.m. on CNN
TENNIS: ATP Franklin Templeton Classic, Semifinal at 9 a.m. (r), Finals at 9 p.m. on Star Sports
GOLF: LPGA Takefuji Classic, First Round at 1 p.m. on ESPN
PGA Honda Classic, Final Round at 2 p.m. (r – 10:30 p.m.) on Star Sports
SNOOKER: Premier Snooker League 2002 at 9:30 p.m. on ESPN
SOCCER: English Premier Football League - Charlton Athletic vs Arsenal at 7 a.m. (r), Manchester United vs Tottenham Hotspur at 12 noon (r) on Star Sports
Western Union World Football at 3 p.m. (r – 8:30 p.m.) on ESPN
Road To World Cup at 5:30 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

Mud wrestling tilt at Padi's Mindave

TO LAUNCH its Summer Beerfest as the Philippine version of Germany's Oktoberfest, Padi's Mindave Restaurant Bar will hold the exciting Mud Wrestling Challenge on March 25.

This unique sports event coincides with the first anniversary celebration of Padi's Mindave, which is located at the corner of Mindanao and Congressional avenues in Quezon City.

Padi's Mindave also caters to horse racing fans through its off-track-betting station at the third floor. It also holds the Mr. & Ms Superbody Bikini Competition every Thursday night and

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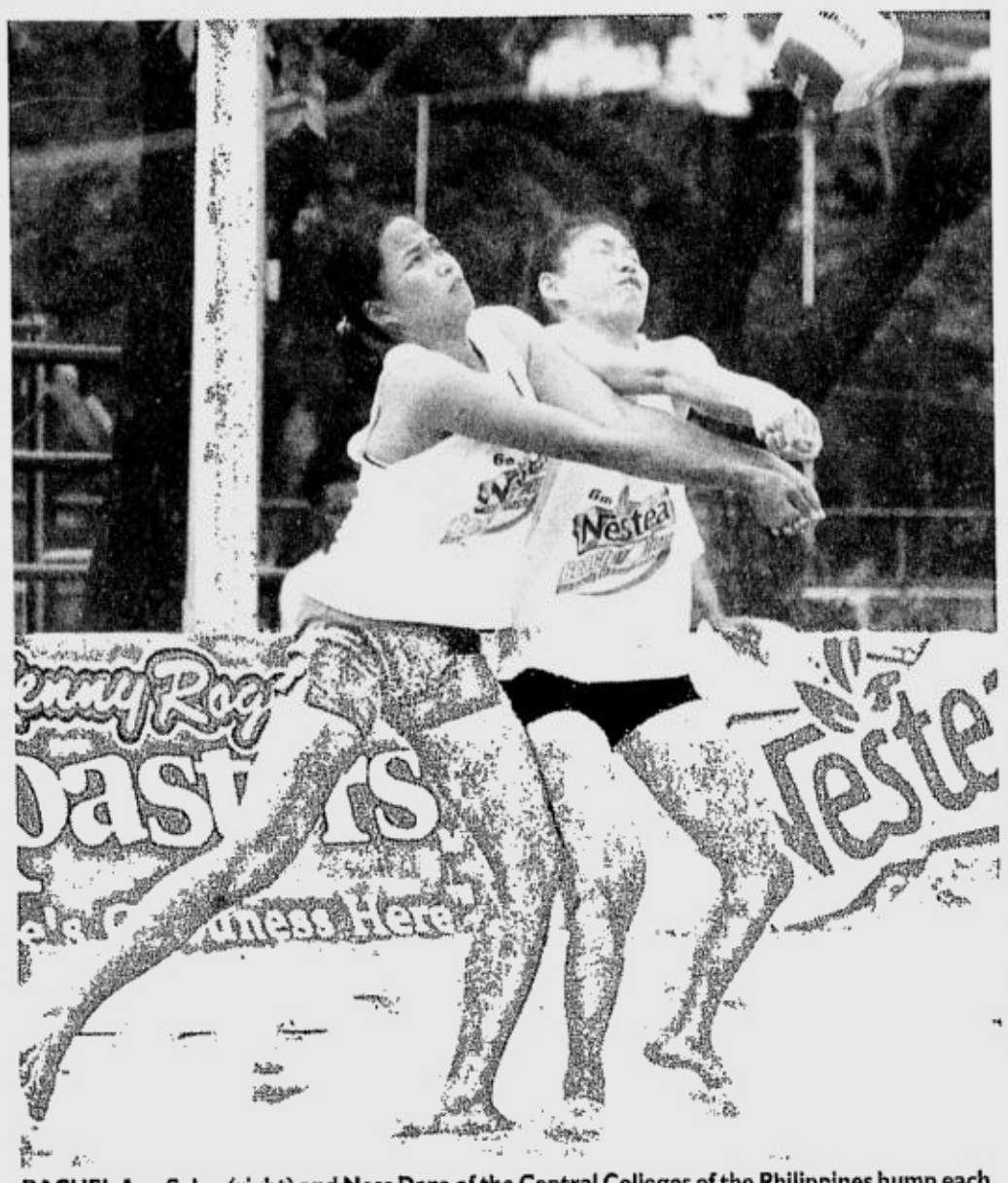


RACHEL Ann Salvo (right) and Ness Daza of the Central Colleges of the Philippines bump each other as they try to return the ball against Rizal Technological University yesterday in the Nestea Beach Volley elims at La Salle-Greenhills. RTU won, 21-17. JESS YUSON

BEACH VOLLEYBALL

Letran, UE lead first round elims winners

By Dennis Eroa

NCAA champion Letran College, University of the East, Far Eastern University and PATTS School of Aeronautics powered their way to their second straight wins yesterday at the end of the first round of Metro Manila eliminations in the 6th Nestea Beach Volley University Championships at the La Salle Greenhills volleyball courts.

Hard-fighting Jeric Francis Bitancar and Mark Anthony Santos proved the better duo down the stretch as the Red Warriors tripped the PSBA Jaguars, 21-19.

Also boosting their chances for a seat in the round of 16 were Far Eastern University which beat College of St. Benilde, 21-18; PATTS which outplayed Philippine State College of Aeronautics, 21-7, and Letran which survived University of Asia and Pacific, 21-17.

The next round of eliminations will be held April 5-7 at the same venue which has been earning kudos for its well-maintained courts. The much-applauded tournament which will also feature the country's top beach volleyball teams in the national finals at scenic Boracay this May.

Leading teams from Luzon will slug it out on April 12-13, while Visayas and Mindanao bets will have the chance to gun for final slots on April 17-18.

Supporting the event spearheaded by Nestle Phils are Speedo (official outfitter), Astring-O-Sol Ice, Asian Spirit, the People's Airline, Mikasa, WG&A Superferry, Villa de Oro in Boracay, Boracay Gold Crown Club, Carl's Jr. and Kenny Rogers Roasters.

The top eight teams in the men's and women's divisions will dispute the P100,000 champion's purse per division. The second and third placers get P50,000 and P25,000, respectively.

St. Jude College continued its surprising shows by edging Lyceum, 22-20, for its second straight victory in the women's side. Also posting their second straight win were Letran, which spanked Manuel Luis Quezon University, 21-8; Philippine Normal University which won by forfeit over Adamson; Philippine Christian University which nipped University of Asia and Pacific, 21-19; University of the East which bumped PSBA, 21-13; and Mapua which downed La Salle, 21-11.

Record field joins Davao triathlon; Garciano shines

DAVAO CITY—A record turnout of 46 triathletes including entries from as far as Manila, Laguna, Cagayan de Oro, Cebu and Dumaguete, showed up in the 1st leg of the Enervon-Araw Ng Dabaw National Age-Group Triathlon (NAGT) series yesterday here.

Awarded line honors was local bet Noel Garciano, 23, football coach of UP-Mindanao, as he was able to follow the correct race route while the others got lost in the run loop.

Garciano clocked 1:12:26 in the 750m swim-20K bike-5K run event and earned 100 points in the race for the top age-groupers in the country.

"I was not expecting to win, I just wanted to improve my time and I did, this is my best time so far in a sprint triathlon," said Garciano who also ruled the 20-24 age category for men.

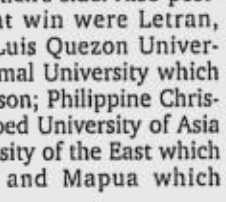
Second overall and runner-up in the 20-24 age category was another Davao entry, Johnny Yanong, who is making a bid to regain his slot in the national training team, he submitted a cumulative time of 1:13:02.

Third placer in the event backed by Speedo, PSC, POC and venue host Waterfront Insular Hotel-Davao, where the race started and ended, was Japanese swimming coach from Dumaguete Hiroshi takei, the men's champion in the 25-29 age category. He clocked 1:13:22.

Rounding out the top 10 overall finishers were Jaffer Jatico, 1:16:50; UST varsity swimmer Sean Lim, 1:17:04; womens overall 1st placer Ripples Rafanan, 1:17:20; Philippine Army's Sgt. Fernando Justo, who topped the 30-34 age-group, at 1:17:29, Felix Motilla, 1:17:30; Chris Aldeguer, 1:18:11; and Edgar Yanong, 1:18:12.

Hottest team

NBA NOTES



Henry Liao

THE ONCE-WOEFUL Portland Trail Blazers are the hottest team in the NBA since the All-Star break, owning a 13-1 record—including an NBA season-best 12-game winning streak—going into yesterday's road encounter with the lowly Denver Nuggets.

During the streak, the Blazers captured six games at home (vs. LA Lakers, Atlanta, Denver, Sacramento, Minnesota and New Jersey) and an equal number on the road (at LA Clippers, Seattle, Philadelphia, Washington, Toronto and Milwaukee) to match the second-longest winning string in franchise history. It was the third time ever the club had put together a dozen consecutive victories. Portland's all-time longest winning streak is 16 games, which it set from March 20-April 19, 1991 to finish with the league's best regular record at 63-19.

As late as Jan. 2, the Blazers were in 10th place in the Western Conference with a 13-18 mark, having dropped their season-worst sixth straight game, (the team's longest since December 1995), and were in danger of missing the playoffs for the first time in 20 years.

There were reports that management was ready to give rookie NBA head coach Maurice Cheeks the ink slip and even considering trading top stars Rasheed Wallace, Scottie Pippen and Bonzi Wells (who is eligible for restricted free agency this summer) to begin a rebuilding program.

Then, following a 101-92 loss at Atlanta on Jan. 8 that relegated the Trail Blazers to 15-19, Cheeks called a team meeting and challenged the players to step up.

The meeting obviously has worked wonders as the players have bonded together and rallied behind Cheeks. According to playmaker Damon Stoudamire, who early in the season complained of his reduced role, the atmosphere in Portland is a good as it has been in years.

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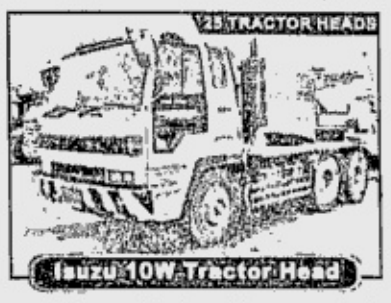

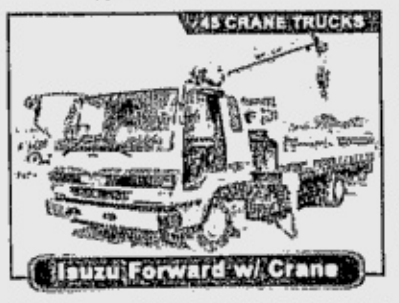

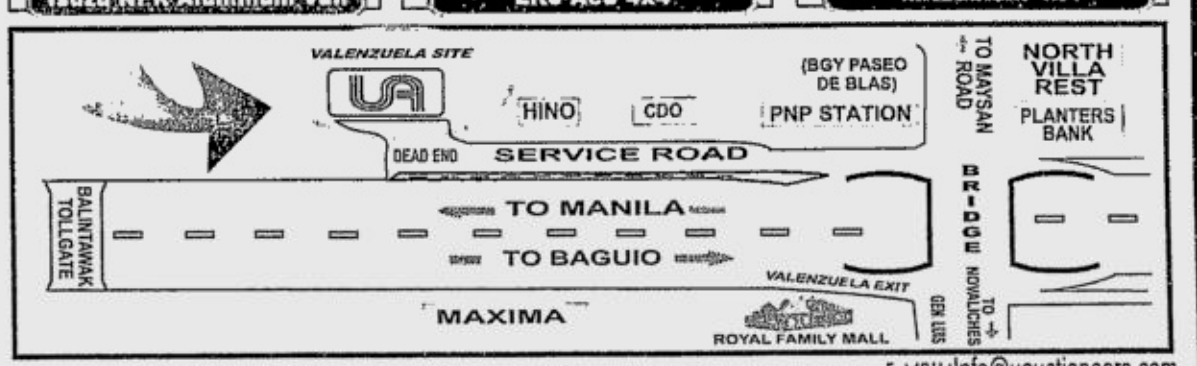

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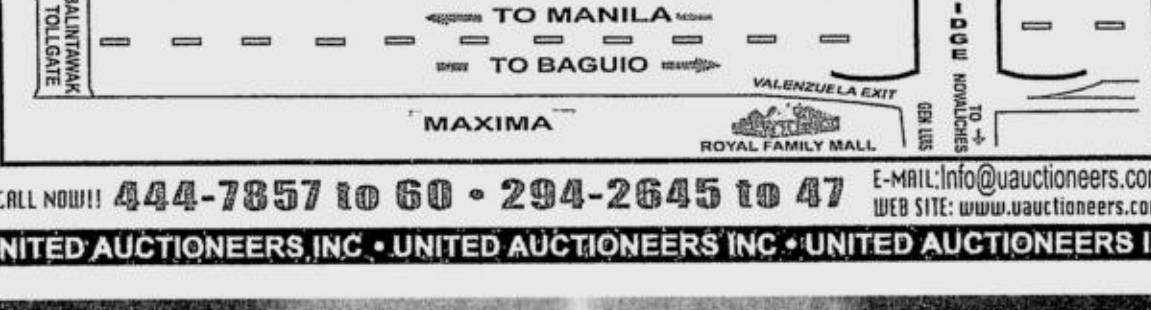

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GIBSON

- Gibson wins RP Open by 4 strokes /A21
- Samsung Cup: FedEx whips Alaska /A22
- Hingis, Seles dominate opponents /A22
- Agassi battles Spaniard in final /A22
- Letran, UE spikers show might /A23

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IVERSON (right) is tackled by Atlanta guard Jacque Vaughn in the first quarter. Iverson scored 28 points to lead the 76ers to a 112-91 victory. AP

Nuggets halt Blazers victory run

DENVER—George McCloud scored 26 points and Voshon Lenard added seven of his 14 points in overtime as the Denver Nuggets beat Portland, 109-106, in overtime to snap the Trail Blazers' 12-game winning streak in the NBA Saturday night.

Juwan Howard added 18 points and 12 rebounds for the Nuggets, who won their second straight.

Scottie Pippen had 28 points and 10 rebounds for Portland. Rasheed Wallace added 26 points, and Bonzi Wells 21.

76ers 112, Hawks 91

In Atlanta, Allen Iverson scored 28 points and Speedy Claxton added 18 as the Philadelphia 76ers beat the Atlanta Hawks, 112-91, for their sixth win in seven games.

Philadelphia moved four games over .500 for the first time this season.

The Sixers pulled away with a 22-6 run at the start of the fourth quarter.

Atlanta, which had a three-game home winning streak snapped, was led by Shareef Abdur-Rahim's 26 points. Jason Terry added 25 points.

Mavericks 107, Warriors 105

In Dallas, Michael Finley scored 28 points and Steve Nash added 22 as the Mavericks beat Golden State.

Dirk Nowitzki added 19 points and 11 rebounds, and Raef LaFrentz had 15 points and nine rebounds for the Mavericks, who won for the seventh time in eight games and picked up their league-leading 44th victory, one more than the Sacramento Kings. *AP*

COMPLETE RESULTS

Spurs 100, Bulls 79; Heat 93, Grizzlies 88; Super sonics 96, Nets 90

RP-Spring whips Aspac

GAMES TODAY:

4 p.m.—Guardo-Lhuillier vs Malaysia
5:30 p.m.—RP-Spring Oil vs Singapore

By Roy Luarca

CEBU City—RP-Spring Oil dug its way out of a deep pit to beat Aspac Texmaco Indonesia, 82-77, last night in the opener of the Southeast Asia Basketball Association (Seaba) Men's Champions Cup at the Cebu Coliseum here.

The Cooking Oil Experts trailed the Indons by as many as 17 points, but recovered their bearing to subdue the Indons through the hot-shooting Joel Co and the lane-slashing Ramil Ferma.

Co went four-of-four from the freethrow line in the last 18 seconds to complement Ferma's three-point play as the Filipinos exploited the fouling out of NBA veteran Khalid Reeves in the last five minutes to turn the game around.

"The boys played with their hearts out. They played with a lot of pride," said RP-Spring Oil Coach Tito Palma. Awed by the presence of 6-foot-9 Joe Hooks and the 6-foot-3 Reeves, the Filipinos lagged behind at 49-32 in the second quarter.

Bobby Parks roused his younger teammates from slumber, however, and the Filipinos finally wrested the lead at 59-46 behind a 13-point cluster anchored on Parks and Ferma.

In the end, however, it was Co's steady foul shooting which saved the Filipinos, who had to weather the Indons' final stand when Reeves fouled out and Hooks rode the bench due to a slight sprain.

Scores:

RP-SPRING OIL 82—Co 23, Ferma 20, Parks 16, Ricafuente 6, De Castro 6, Buendia 4, Garcia 1.

INDONESIA 77—Reeves 27, Hooks 20, Hantono 13, Chandra 5, Daryono 3, Mahendra 1.

Halftime: 44-53.

METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

ROGER CARPIO

ROSANNA Roces loses in the acting contest but wins as Star of the Night in her Maxi Cinco outfit.

Synchronized polls confusing, expensive, say Metro mayors

A26

Osang wears anti-piracy statement in Star Awards

A26

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Columnist of Pilipino Star Ngayon, Phil. Star
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12:00 - 1:30 AM

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ASSESSMENT OF METRO MAYORS

Synchronized polls 'confusing'

By Christian V. Esguerra

WHILE synchronized elections for barangay and Sangguniang Kabataan officials on July 15 might cut the cost of elections in half, it might confuse voters and prove costly for the candidates, warned Metro Manila mayors.

Pasay Mayor Wenceslao Trinidad, spokesperson of the Metro Manila Mayors League, yesterday said the original May 13 schedule should have been followed to avoid any complication.

"What's the difference between holding the elections in May (or) in July?" Trinidad asked. "Problems should have been avoided if the Commission on Elections prepared early for the elections."

The bicameral conference committee made the decision to hold the two elections on July 15 during a marathon meeting last Friday. The final date was a compromise between the Senate and House versions of the bill.

Trinidad asked the Comelec to hold an intensive information drive on who would be allowed to vote in the barangay and SK elections. He said the Comelec should ensure that voters are well informed on all policies concerning the conduct of the elections.

In the agreement reached by the bicameral conference committee, youth voters aged 15 to 17 should vote only for SK officials, and voters 18 and above should vote only for barangay officials.

Trinidad said the new election schedule would give candidates more time to campaign, and in effect, spend more money.

"We all know that in reality, candidates do not follow the campaign schedule," he said. "They campaign much earlier and we can't avoid that."

The new schedule might also enable incumbent local officials facing charges to avoid suspension, Trinidad said. The law provides that these officials could not be suspended from office within 90 days from the elections, he said.

Comelec will be spending only P1.1 billion for the synchronized elections instead of the usual P2.2 billion for separate elections.

A total of P1.1 billion was already earmarked for the barangay election under the 2002 national budget but there was still no corresponding funding for the SK election.

Comelec had assured Congress that if the two elections were held on the same date, expenses would be reduced by half.

The resetting of the two elections will prevent the disenfranchisement of an estimated 3 to 5 million first-time youth voters who failed to register during the Dec. 10-26, 2001 registration conducted by the Comelec, said Senate minority leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. on Saturday.

He said it would also give the Comelec ample time to prepare for the elections and to live up to the expectations for clean, orderly and credible political exercises.

Osang wears anti-piracy statement in Star Awards

By Alex Y. Vergara

FILM and record producers have found an unlikely ally in their losing battle against video and music pirates. Actress Rosanna Roces voiced her support for the beleaguered producers through the racy outfit she wore to the 18th Star Awards for Movies Saturday night at the University of the Philippines Theater.

Known for making headline-grabbing fashion statements in the past, the bold star slipped this time into a CD-studded mini skirt with a hood and plunging neckline by her favorite fashion designer, Maxi Cinco. Roces later won female "Star of the Night," nearly eclipsing Ricky Davao and Ina Raymundo, the evening's big winners in the lead acting categories. ***(More stories this week in the Entertainment and Lifestyle sections.)***

"This is probably as far as I could get," Roces, speaking in Filipino, said of her victory, her fourth award from members of Philippine Movie Press Club. "Through this outfit, I'm expressing my stand against (video and music) pirates and my oneness with producers."

Roces, who starred in Chito Roño's "La Vida Rosa," lost to Raymundo for Best Actress. The latter starred as a naïve barrio lass twice victimized by incest and society's exploitation in "Tuhog." Produced by Regal Films, the film also won several major awards, including Best Picture, Best Director (Jeffry Jeturian), Best Screenplay (Armando Lao) and Best Editing (Ronald Allan Dale).

"A woman becomes more emotional when she becomes a mother," a teary-eyed Raymundo said in Filipino, her voice cracking. "I now have an Erica and this award...my first ever."

Davao, who starred in Jose Javier Reyes' "Minsan, May Isang Puso," bested costar Carlo Aquino and veteran colleagues Joel Torre and Cesar Montano for Best Actor. Aquino earlier won Best Supporting Actor for Marilou Diaz-Abaya's "Bagong Buwan."

The late Nida Blanca, heavily favored to win Best Supporting Actress, lost to Gloria Diaz. The former Miss Universe costarred in Lav Diaz's five-hour opus "Batang West Side."

"Who says winning isn't everything," said an ecstatic Diaz. "Right this minute, I feel that it's everything."

Fellow beauty queen and former Miss International Melanie Marquez came with American husband Adam Lawyer, and later presented veteran actor Armando Goyena with an Ulirang Artista award, PMPC's version of a lifetime achievement award. Goyena staged a screen comeback late last year in Roño's "Yamashita: Tiger's Treasure." He came with his children, notably Tina, Johnny and Maritess Revilla, and several grandchildren.

Acting awards also went to Jiro Manio (Best Child Performer, "La Vida Rosa"), Carlo Muñoz (Best New Actor, "Yamashita"), and Heart Evangelista (Best New Actress, "Trip").

The evening's other big winners were Miguel Fabie III (Best Cinematography, "Batang West Side"), and Rudy Gonzales and Alex Tomboc (Best Sound, "Batang West Side), Judy Lou de Pio (Best Production Design, "Bagong Buwan"), Jay Oliver Durias (Best Musical Score, "La Vida Rosa,") and Toto Sorioso (Best Theme Song, "Trip Mo Ba?" from the movie "Trip).

A lovely Judy Ann Santos won "Face of the Night," while co-host Dingdong Dantes won male "Star of the Night." An excited Isabel Granada edged out Onemig Bondoc, Ara Mina, Gladys Reyes and GMA newscaster Martin Andanar for "Darling of the Press."

WINNERS all (from left): best picture "Tuhog" star Klaudia Koronel, director Jeffrey Jeturian, actress Ina Raymundo, child performer Jiro Manio, supporting actress Gloria Diaz, actor Ricky Davao and supporting actor Carlo Aquino. ROGER CARPIO

Weekend fires greet Fire Prevention Month

MARCH is Fire Prevention Month, but at least four fires were not prevented from breaking out in Manila, Mandaluyong and Malabon.

But no one was reported injured in the fires.

The two fires broke out in Manila, at the United Seafood Restaurant at the corner of Cortada and United Nations Avenue in Ermita, and in a residential area in Malate, said investigators.

Police said the restaurant fire began at 2:15 a.m. in the kitchen of the restaurant and quickly spread.

Manila firefighters and fire volunteer brigades arrived several minutes after the fire began, but managed to control the blaze only an hour later since the restaurant was closed and locked.

While the restaurant fire was still raging, another fire alarm went up at 2:26 a.m. This time, the fire was in a residential area in Malate.

The blaze began in the house of retired National Police Commission inspector Moises Agas at the corner of Campillo Street and President Quirino Avenue, police said. The flames quickly spread to two neighboring houses, owned by sales agent Ronald R. Rellos and housewife Felicitas Ilagan.

Police said Cleofe Mendoza, a housemaid of the Agas household, saw an electric fan burning. She said she woke up her employers and they all rushed out of the house.

The fire spread to the two other houses before it was controlled at 3:45 a.m. Police estimated that the two Manila fires damaged about P5 million worth of property.

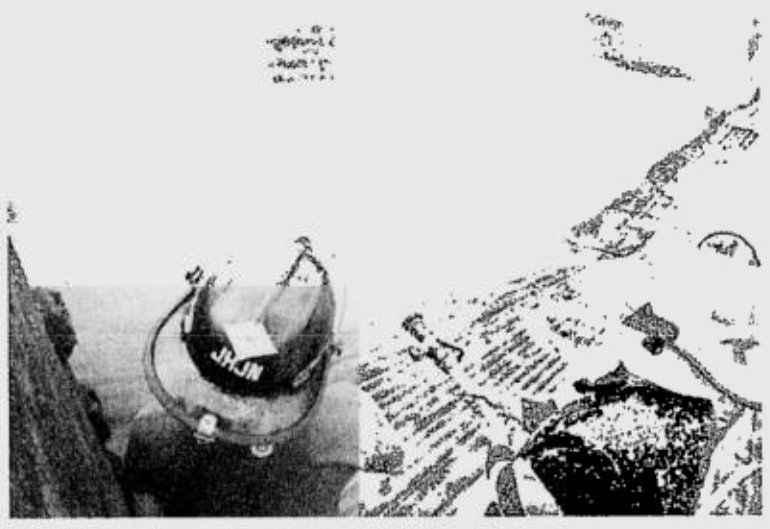
In Mandaluyong, a suspected looter was arrested while a fire raged in a densely populated slum community at the corner of Pinagtipunan and L. Gonzales streets in Barangay Hagdang Bato last Friday, police said.

Levy Lanoza, 38, a resident of Barangay Addition Hills, Mandaluyong City, was caught carrying a mini-stereo component that one of the fire victims owned.

Ten shanties were destroyed in the fire, which started in the house of Dominador Catama and quickly spread to adjoining houses.

Authorities estimated the damage at P2 million. They said narrow streets leading to the fire scene, low water pressure and the presence of hundreds of kibitzers hampered the firemen in putting out the blaze. But local barangay officials helped maintain order and arrest Lanoza, police said.

In Malabon, fire also hit the Orocan plastic company. ***Philip C. Tubeza, Nelson F. Flores***



ROMY HOMILLADA

PLASTIC wares melt in the Orocan factory in Malabon.

3 Bulacan cops linked to abduction, extortion, rob

BALAGTAS, Bulacan—Two policemen here were linked to the disappearance of a man while another policeman in Baliuag town was charged with illegal arrest, robbery and extortion.

Witnesses identified PO1 Eugenio Raymundo and PO3 Cecilio Galvez, both of Balagtas police, in a police line-up and said they were among those who abducted Antonio San Jose, 34, last Feb. 15 in Barangay Burol 1st in Balagtas.

The witnesses said Raymundo and Galvez were with two other men when they abducted San Jose, who was a witness to an illegal drug case.

San Jose's sister Carmencita Recto told the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) in Malolos town that her brother was walking home when the men dragged him to a police patrol car and seized his motorbike on Feb. 15.

She said her brother was never seen again.

Police records showed that Recto was also a witness in the arrest of a Roberto Pua, a suspect in drug pushing.

In Baliuag, SPO1 Renato Cruz was suspended by Senior Supt. Edgardo Acuña, Bulacan police director, after he was charged with illegal arrest, robbery and extortion.

Cruz, who is now under the custody of the CIDG office in Malolos, was accused of abducting Carmelita Santiago, wife of a suspected drug pusher, and of demanding P50,000 in exchange for her release.

Santiago, 34, claimed two other policemen helped Cruz in abducting her.

Santiago sought the help of the CIDG after her abductors released her on condition that she would pay the remaining P23,000.

The CIDG agents arrested Cruz during the payoff and recovered a baby Armalite rifle from him. ***Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

How the Lions won it big for the Poor-People's team

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

ONE of the worst things about a sick economy is that a lot of poor people also get sick suffering under it.

The result is a hideous mismatch.

Lost and hungry, underprivileged flocks get knocked down while slugging it out daily against a tough, unwilling world.

They do odd jobs, abuse their undernourished bodies and labor in unforgiving work sites. They stay out in the streets in the most unholy hours to hawk goodies—taho, peanuts, cigarettes, fish balls, banana cue, whatever—with the limp hope of ending the long day with a little something to make both ends meet.

Sorry, but both ends often don't meet. The poor plodders sleep, together with their families, with empty stomachs.

They would retire cramped like sardines in their dreary box of a home, drowning in the clog and the pollution, wrestling with the filth and the mosquitoes, before getting up half-ready for another slug-out with the enemy.

As can be expected, they often end up wasted and weary, suffering from various diseases.

Time to see a doctor?

Colds, coughs, fevers, name it, have become usual fare in a poor-man's household. They are part of the regular menu.

There could indeed be a more monstrous malady lurking in the laborer's overworked, exploited, underfed body.

But do you think he would go out for a check-up? Not the banana cue vendor, not the ditch digger, not the janitor, not your poor neighbor. A little ginebra in the corner sari-sari store should do the trick.

The seasoned civic worker is right. Health care is not in the poor man's list of priorities.

Regular medical attention is a luxury in this corner.

Silly, sickening.

* * *

But listen to this.

The other Sunday (March 3), Dr. Luciana Bargo, after hearing early Mass, picked up her medical bag, left her clinic and walked five streets in the direction of the Pasig River off Mandaluyong.

She was not on call. She took it upon herself to help provide free medical care to those who can't afford it.

At the corner of A. Bilog and J. Catacutan streets, under a huge tent set up by residents belonging to a non-governmental association, Dr. Bargo took a seat.

This was a little after 8 a.m. and poor residents had started to flock toward the tent where the quiet-faced lady doctor was settled.

A little later, a gray Hi-Ace bearing Dr. Judd de la Vega drove into the area.

Then the lead team of the Lions Club District 301-D1 arrived in a long late-model van. Out came Lions Club stalwart Josel Castro and his comely wife Lucing, both in their standard yellow team jackets. Together with them were Tony Naval, Rolly and Baby Arce.

Sensing the uniformed arrivals, the thickening crowd stirred. There was a commotion. Manong Josel, greying and regal, decided to take over. He promptly called in volunteers from Samahang Alige who next rushed about to set up white plastic tables into segments.

* * *

Meanwhile, the poor residents, upon hearing that, other than free medical and dental services, new reading glasses would be given away, started to push and agitate.

Manong Josel stood tall and boomed: "Order please. Fall in line. We cannot start this."

There was a hush, then instant order.

Three tables were connected, manned, to attend to the now long line of amazed residents who had heard for the first time that there would be new reading glasses for them.

Separate tables were also set up under the huge tent for three other doctors who came to join Drs. Bargo and Judd de la Vega, namely Shelley Ann de la Vega, Crispino Reyes and Tyrone Concepcion.

Another two tables were put in place to serve as medicine dispensary.

With the arrival of two dentists (Priscilla Cueva and Felizardo Dulat) and a nice nurse (Evelyn Daulat), a huge beach umbrella was unfolded under which they set up an impromptu clinic.

Let's go, roared Manong Josel, upon being assured that everything was already in place.

The battle was on.

* * *

What followed was furious action. In a chilling, thrilling, determined, selfless, heart-warming show of force and concern, the team powered by the core of the Obando Lions Club headed by President Ben V. Buenafe and immediate governor Pepe de la Vega (with wife Olive), poured it on against the enemy.

The doctors sweated heavily, the dentists groaned with patients, the instant pharmacists gave their best as the team swiftly toppled the aches, complaints, woes, needs, maladies, all the assorted problems brought in by the poor, needy residents.

In a four-hour combat, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, the team worked smoothly, solidly to defy the odds and ensure victory.

There was no doubting the joyful outcome when time-out was called for lunch—pinesang dalag, chicken-pork adobo, native lechon, sinaing na tulingan. For desert and merienda Jun Castillo sent in two huge boxes of his famous Gold Delight ice-cream on a stick, Nandy Charvet delivered two large trays of banana turon, Danny and Norma Quizon provided tasty pancit and cassava cake, while Jake de Jesus assigned an ice cream vendor to empty the contents of his cart.

When the mission resumed shortly before 1 p.m., there was only limp resistance. Practically all those who had needed help and attention, they were very many, had gotten what they had come for, and more.

At final count, a total of 774 reading glasses had been given out. Close to 600 got dental and medical care, together with free medicines.

* * *

There was a triumphant scene, something out of a holiday post card, in that overcrowded area invaded by the Lions Club team.

Of course, gladness, mainly on the part of the poor beneficiaries, transcended plain mathematics.

After the team of volunteers had downed the assorted problems and afflictions, a sea of awed, thankful beneficiaries emerged.

It was a sort of record, considering that most of the members of the triumphant Obando Lions Club, in bagging the championship, had met only for the first time.

As she walked away with Manong Josel, Lucing Castro said: "Just call on us whenever you need us again."

The morning after, Dr. Lucila Bargo reported early to her clinic.

She looked fulfilled. She had played a key role in that great Lions team that won a big one for the ever-losing Poor-People's team.

Blind date unfair to vice mayor

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

I WAS very surprised when lawyer **Katrina Legarda**, who was my co-sponsor at **Kim** and **Felicia Atienza**'s wedding last Thursday, greeted me with the query, "So Kris, who's the vice mayor?"

I must have really given her a blank expression because she had to elaborate. "There was a blind item about you today in (another broadsheet)," she said, "and I'm just curious to find who is the vice mayor who wants to be senator and who happens to want to marry you."

I asked my "The Buzz" executive producer **Louie** to please bring me a copy of the newspaper so that I could read it before we taped our interview with Parañaque Mayor **Joey Marquez** at the Manila Hotel, immediately after Kim and Felicia's wedding.

If hosting "The Buzz" has taught me anything, it is that silence is tantamount to admission. When you let a piece of rumor go because you don't put any significance to it, chances are others do give it some credence. And before you know it, the rumor is already considered gospel truth.

I just want to nip this particular speculation in the bud, so allow me to address it directly.

The title of the piece was "Who wants to be a senator?" The first line was such a giveaway, at least regarding my identity because it goes like this, "This vice mayor is 'game *na* game *na*' to be senator." The third line of the piece states, "But to make sure he can get national attention, he plans to woo the hostess of a popular TV game show. Even if he gets rejected, he will get some publicity which will not hurt his candidacy."

That hurts

Oohhh, that line of thinking really hurts, because it treats publicity as the primary motive for courting me, regardless of what the outcome may be. Ouch!

The fifth and sixth lines of the piece really made me want to fall off my seat: "The vice mayor frequents the game show set, forcing his presence on the TV hostess. And, as he has told some friends, he is encouraged by the fact that the hostess appears friendly. Now he is considering making the TV hostess his bride because he believes that will truly insure his victory in the senatorial election."

Wow! I'm not so desperate to be married that I'd barter my wedding for a guaranteed number of nationwide campaign appearances. Thank you though to the writer for saying that the vice mayor gives my nationwide popularity such high marks.

The last line is actually the funniest: "The problem is the girl may run for the Senate herself."

Granting that I am entertaining illusions of one day becoming a senator of our land, in 2004, happily, I'll only be 33, two years shy of the Senate's minimum age requirement of 35 years.

Nothing regular

It would be unfair to name the vice mayor being referred to in the blind item. I'll just let him issue his own denial.

The truth is, that vice mayor has been on the set of Game KNB a total of twice—once as a contestant and once when he passed by on his way to a recording session in ABS-CBN. If I'm not mistaken, my director is his *kumpare* because he is baptismal godfather to *Direk* **Bobbet Vidanes**' only daughter. He didn't stay on our set long enough to chat me up. I merely bumped into him on my way in, and he was on his way out.

Apart from occasionally texting me to say he liked an article I wrote, or to comment on an episode of "Game KNB," we don't have regular communication. He has visited me at home very briefly, as in less than 20 minutes, just twice.

We've never eaten or had coffee out together. He has never made any indication whatsoever that he wanted to date me, court me, much less marry me.

I'm mature enough at this point to not put any meaning into the cakes and pastries that he has at times sent to my house.

Unflattering

I know for a fact that he's been in a stable, long-term relationship, and he in fact said on "The Buzz" during his guest appearance a couple of weeks back that he loved his partner very much and that he was very happy with his current romantic state. The last thing I'd want is for his partner to feel awkward, especially on my account, particularly because the one time I met her, at City Hall in fact, she was very kind in assisting me regarding **Josh**'s birth certificate.

This blind item didn't paint me in a negative light at all, apart from the fact that being visibly single really makes me fair game. It does paint an unflattering picture of the vice mayor, because in all fairness, he's an achiever who did win a very resounding victory during the 2001 polls. In fact, I did cast my vote for him.

To end this, let me just say that when I do have a boyfriend, or when there will be a suitor with major potential, then he won't be a constant presence on my game show's set. And believe me, he won't be the subject of a Kris and Tell article, or a Buzz feature.

Those who know me very well know that when I'm unnaturally quiet to the point of being reticent, that's when the man and the relationship are, in all probability, for keeps.

Shape of things to come on the local film scene

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

ONE of the major changes on the local film scene this past decade has been the rise of the "supermall theater circuit," which now rivals traditional moviehouse chains in the major cities of the country.

The many mall cineplexes that sprouted up in the '90s changed the profile of our film audience. Before, the majority of that audience belonged to the D-E economic classes.

With the rise of the mall theater circuit (with its higher ticket prices and blockbuster offerings), the majority has been wrested away by the B-C crowds.

Thus, filmgoing has become a predominantly middle-class activity: the *bakya* crowd of old has been replaced by people wearing shoes. This development has caused film companies to vary, update and upgrade the movies they make for the local audience.

That's why hoary, old formulas and clichés have fallen into disrepute, and are being replaced by fresher concepts and star combinations, and better production values.

But there's another incipient development that could alter the filmgoing scene in a similarly major way. Some industry insiders have told us that a number of big businessmen are pooling their resources to build a chain of minimalls in many central locations, each with two theaters that will screen digital movies beamed to their screens via satellite.

There will be so many of these malls and digital film theaters that they will constitute another major moviehouse circuit in the years to come. And they will be highly competitive because they will be able to set lower ticket prices, since digital filmmaking and screening are less expensive than the conventional systems now in place.

That being the case, the new digital film industry will make it possible for more new filmmakers and producers to gain entry into the mainstream moviemaking scene. Thus, if handled right, the digital trend could give the lethargic movie scene the major boost that it's been needing all these years.

Let's hope that, if this plan pushes through, our film people will be able to take these changes in a positive light, and use them to the industry's advantage. For this to happen, however, they must welcome change and not resist it, and learn how to work with the new players who will be entering the scene in the next five years.

International Women's Film Festival

THE 13TH International Women's Film Festival is ongoing at the UP Film Center. The film on show today, March 11, at 4 and 7 p.m. is **Lina Wertmuller**'s "Fernando e Carolina."

On his deathbed in 1829, King Fernando I Borbone of Napies tries to escape the ghosts of his bloody kingship by remembering his younger days, when he was allowed to go hunting and to invent love games.

March 12 from 1 to 4 p.m., "Kababihan, Kapayapaan, Kabayanihan," a tri-media presentation of the Philippine Association of University Women – UP Chapter. Guests of honor are Reps. Loretta Rosales and Liza Maza, and Commissioner Aurora Javate-de Dios, National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women.

At 4 and 6 p.m., two short films, "Bullet Days" and "Attack Champion," will be followed by a 63-minute documentary, Sari Lluch Dalena and Camilla Griggers, "Memories of A Forgotten War." The docu is a creative re-telling of the Philippine-American War of 1899-1902.

Told from the point of view of the daughter of a Filipino-American war orphan, the film visualizes episodes of violence in war, in order to confront its stark brutality and begin the process of healing.

Gretchen on 'Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan'

AT 7 TONIGHT, **Gretchen Barretto** will make her comeback as a TV actress on ABS-CBN's "Sa Dulo ng Walang Hanggan," which stars her younger sister, **Claudine**.

Thus far, Claudine's character, Angeline, has been employed by the generous Don Miguel (**Ronaldo Valdez**). While the scheming Amelia (**Glydel Mercado**) continues to bedevil poor Angeline, a mysterious new character, played by Gretchen, makes her entry into the family's life. Who is she? What does she want? *Abangan!*

On the National Geographic Channel

AT 10 tonight, watch "The Journey of Life" (Episode 1) on the National Geographic Channel. Join scientists who are finding clues in fossils, genetics and even modern animals that indicate that the first animal on earth was the humble sponge.

On Monday, March 11 at 11 p.m., "Scientific American Frontiers" zeroes in on the USA's latest "epidemic," obesity.

Robert De Niro's '15 Minutes' on video

C-INTERACTIVE Digital Entertainment has released "15 Minutes" with **Robert De Niro** and **Edward Burns** on video. The story starts when two ex-cons from the Czech Republic arrive in New York and discover that American criminals enjoy widespread media coverage.

Driven by a desire for fame, they shoot a "snuff" film of grisly proportions. By selling their twisted docu-drama to the media, they hope to become wealthy crime sensations.

But ace arson investigator Jordy Warsaw and top police detective Eddie Fleming hunt them down through the mean streets of New York. "15 Minutes" is available on VHS or VCD formats.

Why Kuh and daughter 'walked out' of Kim Atienza wedding

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

VERY discreet and quiet was **Kuh Ledesma**'s way.

Midway in the wedding of Manila 5th District Councilor **Kim Atienza** and **Felicia Hung** at San Agustin Church in Intramuros Thursday night, Kuh left quietly with her daughter **Isabella**. Perhaps Kuh didn't want to create a scene or be talked about: Her estranged husband, **Louie Quirino Gonzales**, had just arrived at the church with his girlfriend **Bingbing Gonzales**.

Kuh did not really walk out. Her exit was hardly noticed, except probably by those who knew why. She even smiled at the kibitzers outside the church before she got into her car, careful not to give them any hint that she was feeling bad.

Kuh must have felt ill at ease inside the church, knowing that her ex-hubby and his girlfriend were in one of the pews behind. But she had enough class to not make a big fuss about it.

Kim later told us he invited both Kuh and Louie because both are his friends. Before fire gutted Kuh's Republic of Malate restaurant-bar last year, Kim was among the couple's favorite guests.

Although Kim is not from show biz, his wedding was a star-studded event.

Kris Aquino, his good friend and prayer partner at Baclaran Church, led the list of principal sponsors with lawyer **Katrina Legarda** and El Shaddai leader Bro. **Mike Velarde**.

Dina Bonnevie was the lector and **Robert Seña** sang during the ceremony.

Also spotted were show biz couple **David Bunevacz** and **Jessica Rodriguez**, ABS-CBN newscaster **Karen Davila, Geneva Cruz,** designers **Rajo Laurel** and Frederick Peralta, and Manila Councilors **Robert Ortega, Cita Astals** and **Larry 'Pipoy' Silva**.

Kim and Fely left yesterday for a week-long honeymoon at Maldives.

Back to comedy

KEEMPEE de Leon is back to making people laugh. Sidelined from comedy for a long time, Keempee has returned to what he loves doing best. His flair for comedy is obviously a talent he took after his dad, **Joey de Leon**.

Keempee was a regular on the gag shows "Tropang Trumpo" and "Going Bayabas." However, when these folded up, he was made to try drama. He joined the cast of "Villa Quintana" and is also a semi-regular on "Munting Paraiso."

He was thrilled when he was offered to be a part of the new ABS-CBN gag show, "Klasmeyts." He completes the wacky quintet with **Herbert Bautista, Bayani Agbayani, Michael Flores** and **Paolo Contis**.

Keempee admits he had to get used to doing comedy again when they taped for "Klasmeyts."

"I concentrated on drama for a long time, so I had to adjust on our first day of taping day," he shares. "But I started out as a comedian, so it wasn't really that hard to do comedy again. It helps that I have very good co-stars who are all crazy. We had instant rapport on the set."

"Klasmeyts" is inspired by America's "Saturday Night Live," with the comedians performing before a live audience in the studio.

Directed by **Johnny Manahan**, "Klasmeyts" airs every Wednesday, 9:30 p.m., after "Whattamen." Creative consultant for "Klasmeyts" is **Ariel Ureta**, himself a veteran comedian-host.

New radio show

LAST week, President **Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo** ordered the cancellation of her radio and TV program, "May Gloria ang Bukas Mo," after it became inconvenient for her, its crew and the guests.

But starting today, the President's voice will be heard again on the radio in a new, 30-minute program to be aired at 7:30 a.m. on Radyo ng Bayan. This time, the new show promises to be very simple, direct and up to date, with the President telling the Filipino people of the progress of her government.

According to Press Undersecretary Manuel Sanchez, the format of the new program will be very simple. For the first two minutes, the President will make an opening statement that could be anywhere from policy pronouncements to any message she wants to impart.

DE LEON. Goes wacky anew in the ABS-CBN gag show, "Klasmeyts."

A question and answer portion follows.

The program airs every Monday, when the President has limited provincial trips. If Ms Macapagal has to go out of town on a Monday, the program will still be aired with the President on a telephone hook-up.

Sanchez said the new radio show will have a lower production cost compared to "May Gloria ang Bukas Mo," which required transporting guests and production crew from one province to another.

For the pilot episode, Ms Macapagal will have several commentators from different radio stations asking her about today's pressing issues.

Ms Macapagal will have breakfast with her guests before the program starts.

Sharon, Joey G guest in Brickman's two-night concert at PICC

MEGASTAR Sharon Cuneta and Side A vocalist Joey Generoso are the special guests in the forthcoming two-night concert of internationally renowned pianist-composer Jim Brickman at the PICC on March 15 and 16.

Brickman, who penned such well-loved tunes as "Valentine," "By Heart," "The Gift" and "Your Love," will be in the country as part of the promo tour he is conducting for his latest album, "Simple Things," under BMG Records.

The two-night concert is being mounted by Vis-à-Vis Entertainment, with JLF Productions.

Sharon has recorded two compositions by Brickman—"Where's the Good in Goodbye" and "In Your Eyes"—in her BMG Records debut album, "When I Love."

For ticket inquiries, call Ticketworld at 891-5610 or visit all major National Bookstore branches, Robinson's Department Stores (Galleria and Malate), Tower Records (Makati and Alabang) and Music Museum in Greenhills.

Official residence of Brickman in Manila is Hyatt Regency Hotel, which offers a special package for the concert.

For only P6,000 net, you can avail of two orchestra seat tickets to the show, an overnight accommodation for two in a deluxe room with buffet breakfast and free welcome drinks at Calesa Bar.

SHOWS

For reservations, call Hyatt at 833-1234.

'Ilaw@Aliw' Part 2

AFTER a successful show last December, the musical extravaganza, "Ilaw@Aliw," will be staged once again on Thursday, March 14, 7:30 p.m. at Music Museum in Greenhills.

Versatile comedian Willie Nepomuceno spearheads and stars in the project. Ballet Manila principals Lisa Macuja-Elizalde and Osias Barroso will perform with their ensemble.

Robert Seña, who impressed audiences and critics here and abroad for playing Thuy in the London, German and Manila productions of "Miss Saigon," teams up with Gigi Valmores for their rendition of popular Broadway tunes.

CUNETA

BORJA

VELASQUEZ

TOMAS

NEPOMUCENO

MACUJA

Valmores was also part of the Australian, London and Manila productions of "Miss Saigon."

For ticket reservations, call Music Museum at 721-6726 or Creative Synergy at 897-5011.

'Crossover Presents'

SHE has a new blockbuster movie, a new platinum album, record-breaking concerts plus the distinction of being the first Filipino singer to win MTV Asia's Favorite Artist (Philippines) award.

All these achievements happened in just one month and Regine Velasquez couldn't be happier.

On Thursday, March 14, Regine returns to the Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental Manila for another evening of "Crossover Presents."

Regine, who filled up Captain's Bar last June, is back to render soothing Crossover classics, with resident musicians Mel Villena on sax, Bobby Taylo on bass, Cesar Aguas on guitar, Roy Mercado on drums and Antonio Maigue on flute. Musical director is Gerard Salonga.

The Opera provides back-up vocals.

The mellow sound of Da Capo sets the mood at 8 p.m.

Joining Regine as special guest is TV personality and comedienne Tessie Tomas, who will tickle the audience with her antics.

For ticket inquiries, call Ticket World at 891-5610 or Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental at 750-8888.

Chad and his new band

BALLADEER Chad Borja is back in the groove and this time, he's out to deliver his kind of music with his newly formed K10 Band.

K10 plays pop-fusion. The band is composed of Jonjon Castañeda (musical director and guitarist), Wowie Posadas (keyboardist), Jerry de Leon (bassist), Jun Austria (drummer), Jun Figueroa (sax) and Jun Boogie (percussionist).

The band plays at Hard Rock Makati on all Wednesdays of March, Padi's Point Las Piñas (March 8, 15, 23 and 30), La Chapelle in Cebu City on March 14 and 15 and Campzitro in Cebu on March 23.

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3 WE WERE SOLDIERS
4 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5 13 GHOSTS
6 GOT 2 BELIEVE
7 ESKANDALOSA
8 A BEAUTIFUL MIND

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 ·7161416

1 GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 13 GHOST
3 WE WERE SOLDIERS
4 SHALLOW HAL
5 WE WERE SOLDIERS
6 ESKANDALOSA
7 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
8 BEAUTIFUL MIND
9 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10 GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 SHALLOW HAL
3 ALI
4 WE WERE SOLDIERS
5 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
6 GOT 2 BELIEVE
7 WE WERE SOLDIERS
8 GOT 2 BELIEVE
9 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10 ESKANDALOSA
11 13 GHOSTS
12 NOT ANOTHER TEEN

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1 ALI
2 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
4 WE WERE SOLDIERS
5 13 GHOSTS
6 WE WERE SOLDIERS
7 MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
8 GOT 2 BELIEVE
9 GOT 2 BELIEVE
10 SHALLOW HAL
11 ESKANDALOSA
12 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401

1 COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2 SHALLOW HAL
3 WE WERE SOLDIERS
4 WE WERE SOLDIERS
5 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
6 BEAUTIFUL MIND
7 13 GHOSTS
8 ALI
9 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10 GOT 2 BELIEVE
11 ESKANDALOSA
12 GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9295452

1 SHALLOW HAL
2 13 GHOSTS
3 ESKANDALOSA
4 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5 GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
7 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8 WE WERE SOLDIERS
9 CLOSED
10 CLOSED
11 CLOSED
12 CLOSED

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888

1 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
3 WE WERE SOLDIERS
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 13 GHOSTS
6 SHALLOW HAL
7 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
8 WE WERE SOLDIERS
9 GOT 2 BELIEVE
10 ESKANDALOSA

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

1 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2 SHALLOW HAL
3 MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4 MARSHALL DICK
5 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6 HINOG SA PILIT
7 GOT 2 BELIEVE
8 GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1 RAT RACE
2 CLOSED
3 THE OTHERS
4 SHALLOW HAL
5 GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 RIDING IN CARS . . .
7 CLOSED
8 MARSHALL DICK

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1 SHALLOW HAL
2 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 GOT 2 BELIEVE
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 HINOG SA PILIT
6 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1 A BEATIFUL MIND
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 WE WERE SOLDIERS
4 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

SM CINEMA GUADALUPE
8820984

1 ESKANDALOSA
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 GOT 2 BELIEVE

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 GOT 2 BELIEVE
4 ESKANDALOSA

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998

1 MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
2 COLLATERAL DAMAGE
3 SHALLOW HAL
4 HINOG SA PILIT
5 GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 RAT RACE

SM BICUTAN

1
2
3
4

SOON TO OPEN! 4 NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART VISION & SOUND

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1
2
3
4

SOON TO OPEN! 4 NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART VISION & SOUND

THE PODIUM
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1
2

SOON TO OPEN! 2 NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART VISION & SOUND

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1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE

G4 (GLORIETTA 4)
1 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
2 ALI
3 A BEAUTIFUL MIND (THX) — GUARANTEED SEATS
4 SALSA
5 SHALLOW HAL
6 WE WERE SOLDIERS
7 13 GHOSTS

GB1 (GREENBELT 1)
1 AMORES PERROS (Exclusive Screening)
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 Onstage: ILLUSIONE MARCH 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16

ATC (ALABANG TOWN CENTER)
1 WE WERE SOLDIERS (THX)
2 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 WE WERE SOLDIERS

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MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
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Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 (DCS) SHALLOW HAL
2 (SDDS) WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 (DTS) COLLATERAL DAMAGE
4 GOLD (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
5 GOLD (DOLBY) WE WERE SOLDIERS
6 GOLD (SDDS) 13 GHOSTS
7 GOLD (DOLBY) NOT ANOTHER TEEN
8 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
9 GOT 2 BELIEVE
10 GOT 2 BELIEVE

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486

1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE
3 (DTS) BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4 ESKANDALOSA
5 RESERVE
6 (DTS) RESERVE
Golden Pearl THX RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3274

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 ESKANDALOSA

starmall Movies
(Shaw Blvd.) tel 724.4986

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) WE WERE SOLDIERS
5 ESKANDALOSA

METROPOLIS star
tel 850.4285

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 ESKANDALOSA
4 WE WERE SOLDIERS
5 NOT ANOTHER TEEN
6 13 GHOSTS
7 RESERVE
8 RESERVE

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) TEL. 751-2010 TO 13

1 A BEAUTIFUL MIND

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 IKAW LAMANG . . .
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL, INC.
tel 930.9515

1 RESERVE
2 ESKANDALOSA
3 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Spring
(Libertad, Pasay City) tel 831.7864

1 ESKANDALOSA
A BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 ESKANDALOSA
4

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

1 (DOLBY) BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2
3
4 ESKANDALOSA
5 13 GHOSTS
6 GOT 2 BELIEVE
7 (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8 (SDDS) WE WERE SOLDIERS
9 (DOLBY) NOT ANOTHER TEEN

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2 ESKANDALOSA

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
3 ESKANDALOSA
4 (SDDS) BATAS NG LANSANGAN
5 GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 (DOLBY) WE WERE SOLDIERS
7 (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8 13 GHOSTS
9 ALI

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

1 (DTS) WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 ESKANDALOSA
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 (SDDS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
6 WE WERE SOLDIERS
7 (DOLBY) NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
8 13 GHOSTS

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 ESKANDALOSA
5 (SDDS) WE WERE SOLDIERS

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson ESKANDALOSA
Lords ESKANDALOSA
Jennet

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 ESKANDALOSA

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3 RESERVE

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 (DOLBY) BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE
5 ESKANDALOSA

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA
tel 244.4619

1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5 RESERVE
6 RESERVE

FRC Cinema
Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 BLACK HAWK DOWN

Berma
tel 879.2029

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 ESKANDALOSA

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna) tel (049) 534.2185 / 534.2198

1 GOT 2 BELIVE
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
2 (DTS) GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DOLBY) BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DOLBY) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 (DTS) NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel (075) 568.6771

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 SOON TO OPEN
4 SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 (DOLBY) MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
4 (DTS) COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 APOY SA MAGDAMAG
3 ESKANDALOSA
4 (DTS) WE WERE SOLDIERS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
5 MOTHMAN PROPHECIES

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 A BEAUTIFUL MIND

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 GOT 2 BELIEVE

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1 13 GHOSTS
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3 HALIK SA AKING LUPA

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1 ALI
2 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
3

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS) GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DTS) BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 COLLATERAL DAMAGE
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
2 KATE & LEOPOLD
3 SHALLOW HAL
4 GOT 2 BELIEVE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX) SHALLOW HAL
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 (DTS) A BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 BATAS NG LANSANAGAN

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

PREMIERE CINEMA THX NOW SHOWING

RUSSELL CROWE
A BEAUTIFUL MIND
ED HARRIS

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS

NOW SHOWING

Galleria 632-9115-16 633-7641 loc. 279

1 (THX) WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 13 GHOSTS
4 WE WERE SOLDIERS
5 BEAUTIFUL MIND
6 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
7 SHALLOW HAL
8 GOT 2 BELIEVE
9 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
10 ALI

Ermita 536-7809-12

1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4 13 GHOSTS
5 BEAUTIFUL MIND
6 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
7 WE WERE SOLDIERS

Metro East - Marcos hway 682-8193 / 8280

1 ALI
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 BEAUTIFUL MIND
4 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
5 13 GHOSTS
6 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
7 GOT 2 BELIEVE
8 ESKANDALOSA

Novaliches 935-3229-30

1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 GOT 2 BELIEVE
4 13 GHOSTS
5 BEAUTIFUL MIND
6 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
7 ESKANDALOSA
8 ALI

Imus 471-8188 / 875-3838

1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4 BEAUTIFUL MIND
5 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6 ESKANDALOSA

Bacolod 441-0453 / 0459

1 KATE & LEOPOLD
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 THE OTHERS
4 RIDING IN CARS
5 FROM HELL
6 IKAW LAMANG . . .

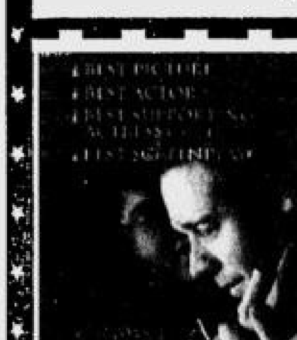
Iloilo 336-8077-78

1 THE OTHERS
2 SHALLOW HAL
3 MARSHALL DICK
4 RIDING IN CARS
5 GOT 2 BELIEVE
6 RAT RACE

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp. 875-1927

1 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
2 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
3 SHALLOW HAL
4 SHALLOW HAL
5 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
6 BATAS NG LANSANGAN

malabon citisquare- soon to open.



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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Strange illness overcomes 100 people after pre-Oscar ceremony

LOS ANGELES—A mystery illness has overcome at least 100 guests who attended a pre-Oscar ceremony honoring scientific and technical achievement last weekend.

About 500 people attended the dinner and awards presentation at the Regent Beverly Wilshire hotel in Beverly Hills on Saturday. Although many became ill the next day, some guests didn't show symptoms for several days.

The total number of people sickened has not been determined, but the Los Angeles County Department of Health said Thursday that at least 100 were overcome, while Oscar officials said it could be nearly 200.

County epidemiologists were examining everything from the fish and beef on the menu to the desserts and wine. Investigators also collected stool samples from sickened individuals to determine the nature of the disorder.

The illness was characterized by vomiting, diarrhea, nausea and sometimes a low-grade fever. Symptoms were typically lasting one to two days.

Nearly 20 employees of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences called in sick earlier this week amid the organization's busy Oscar season, said spokesperson John Pavlik. Among them is Laura Ziskin, who's producing the March 24 Oscar telecast. AP

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	ALI
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	13 GHOSTS
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	ESKANDALOSA
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	WE WERE SOLDIERS
ODEON-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
ROBEN	ESKANDALOSA
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE / AMERICAN PIE 2
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR	ESKANDALOSA
REMAR-2	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	GOT 2 BELIEVE IN MAGIC
B	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
C	ISKANDALOSA
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-2	EIGA SAI FILM FESTIVAL
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
CINEMA-2	ESKANDALOSA
CINEMA-3	COLLATERAL DAMAGE
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	ALI
CINEMA-6	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-7	HINOG SA PILIT
CINEMA-8	SHALLOW HAL
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
CINEMA-12	13 GHOSTS
CINEMA-14	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-15	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	GOT 2 BELIEVE
CINEMA-2	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-3	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-4	NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
CINEMA-5	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-6	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS
Late Night Screening
QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
on March 12, 2002 - Tuesday
10:00 p.m. @
Robinsons Movieworld
Ermita, Galleria
and Metro East- PASIG.
Get a chance to win FREE invites to the Advance Screening of
" THE MAJESTIC "
on March 14, 2002 - Thursday @ Robinsons Movieworld Galleria- Cinema 2

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 1
WE WERE SOLDIERS
11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00
P 13
CINEMA 2
A BEAUTIFUL MIND
12:35, 3:20, 6:05, 8:50
P 13
Matinee: P80.00 - Screenings before 5:00pm, Monday thru Friday (Free Seating).
Reserved Seating: P120.00 - After 5:00pm; Saturday, Sunday, Holidays.
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MUSIC MUSEUM
MUSIC MUSEUM March 14 (LAW@ALIW WILIE NEPOMUCENO
7:30 PM / March 22, 2002 AYEN The Launching 9:00 PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL :

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND EX

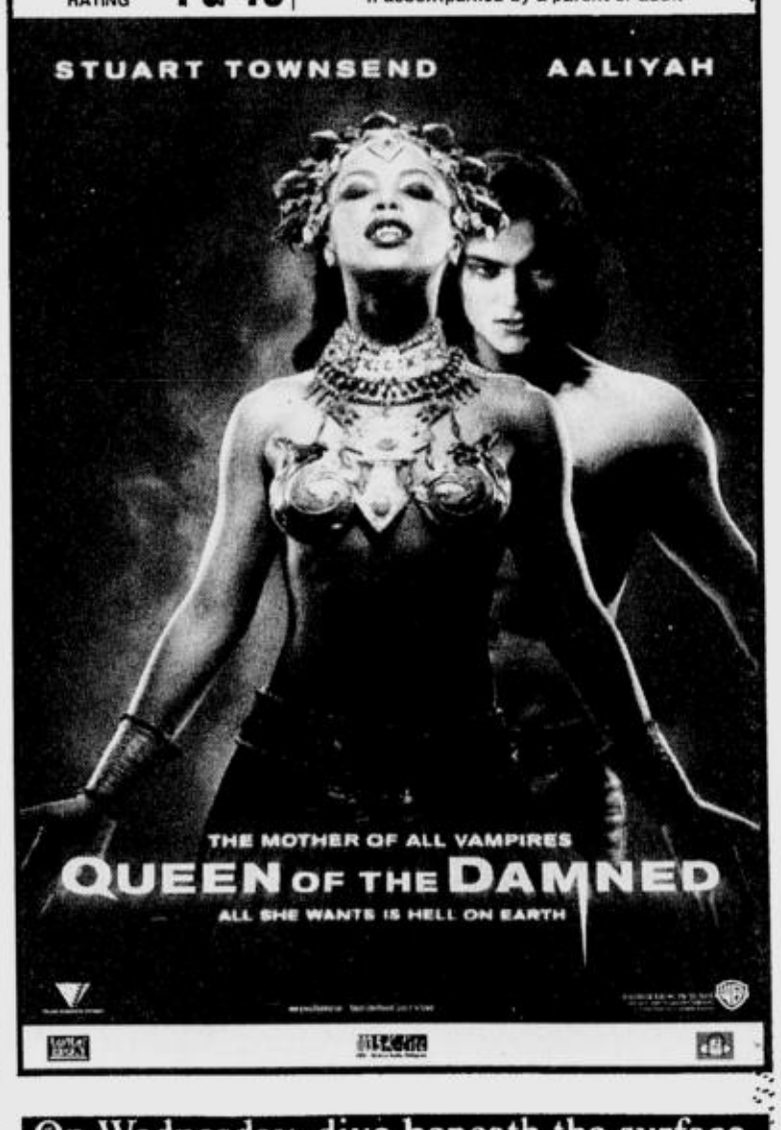
GOT 2 BELIEVE - GP 12:45, 3:00, 5:15, 7:30, 9:45	A BEAUTIFUL MIND - P13 1:05, 3:50, 6:45, 9:35	WE WERE SOLDIERS - P 13 11:00, 1:40, 4:25, 7:10, 10:00
NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE - R 18 12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:30	WE WERE SOLDIERS - P 13 12:40, 3:25, 6:10, 9:00	A BEAUTIFUL MIND - P13 11:00, 1:50, 4:40, 7:30, 10:20

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri., 11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

AYALA CINEMAS
ART FILM - GREENBELT
Art Films
NOW SHOWING
ACADEMY AWARD NOMINEE
BEST FOREIGN LANGUAGE FILM
"A fiercely brilliant film of such wrenching impact, nonstop drive and unpredictability that watching it becomes an exhilarating ride."
-- Michael Wilmington
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

WINNER - BEST FILM !
2001 ARIELS / TOKYO INT FILMFEST / BOGOTA FILMFEST / BOSTON SOCIETY / BRITISH ACADEMY / CAMERIMAGE / CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL / FANTASPORTO / INDEPENDENT SPIRIT / NATIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW(USA)
A boldly conceived and intricately plotted drama of love, loss, retribution and redemption, AMORES PERROS has already been hailed by the NEW YORK TIMES as "the first classic of the new decade." Ever since its acclaimed and award-winning world premiere at Cannes, this directorial debut by Alejandro González Iñárritu has made a sensation on the international film festival circuit, where it has been praised as a film of outstanding power, originality, and raw beauty. It has also won a stunning array of prizes from both juries and audiences alike, proclaiming not only its impressive artistic achievements, but also its undeniable and visceral power to excite people in new and unexpected ways.
AMORES PERROS raises provocative questions about the human condition at the same time that the film daringly recapitulates and reinvents different styles of Latin cinema. The result is a vivid and intricate mosaic of classic themes rendered in original -- and unforgettable ways.
MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R)
NOKIA SKYFILMS INQUIRER

SPECIAL ADVANCED SCREENINGS
@
The All-Digital Sound
GLORIETTA 4
CINEMAS
March 11 (Monday)
Screening Schedules
12:30 pm / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00 / 10:30 lmf
Tickets are available at the Glorietta 4 Cinemas Ticket Booth.
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)
A UNIQUE CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE.
THAT IS WHAT'S SHOWING AT
AYALA CINEMAS

VAMPIRES OF THE WORLD UNITE ON MARCH 13 !
MTRCB RATING PG-13 | Children below 18 yrs.old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult


MTRCB RATING R-18 | Strictlyfor ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted
PINIPILAHAN...PINAG-UUSAPAN!

"Superb cinematography..." -Ricky Lo (Philippine Star)
"Hindi bastos ang dating..." -Julie Fe Navarro (People's Tonight)
"Barbara Milano, SCANDAL QUEEN..." -Ronald Constantino (Tempo)
"Sobrang init ng Eskandalosa..." -Dondon Sermino (Abante)
"A movie that you ust see in theaters!" -Ed De Leon (Taliba)
eskandalosa
introducing ruby padilla & barbara milano
written & directed by joven m. tan
photographed by romy vitug
FET FILMS INTERNATIONAL
WARNING:
Hindi puwedeng panoorin ng mga menor de edad.
STRICTLY FOR ADULTS ONLY!

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GOLDEN GLOBE WINNER
BEST ACTOR — GENE HACKMAN
"THE FILM OF THE YEAR."
"★★★★
This masterful comedy belongs to Gene Hackman, who gives one of the most remarkable performances of his career."

Danny GLOVER Gene HACKMAN Anjelica HUSTON Bill MURRAY Gwyneth PALTROW Ben STILLER Luke WILSON Owen WILSON
THE ROYAL TENENBAUMS
MTRCB PG-13 | Distributed by Buena Vista International and Columbia Pictures

On Wednesday, dive beneath the surface.
Academy Award-winners
KEVIN SPACEY and JUDI DENCH
Academy Award-nominees
JULIANNE MOORE and CATE BLANCHETT

You'll never know what you may find inside...
THE SHIPPING NEWS
Based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel
SKYFILMS
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P1.6-B rescue plan for garments sector set

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE GARMENTS and Textile Export Board has tailored a P1.6-billion development package for the garments and textile export industry, which is struggling to maintain its dwindling share of the US market in the face of stiff competition from China and fast-rising apparel makers in Asia and Latin America.

The package is a combination of low-cost financing, substantial cuts in government fees and penalties, quota incentives, and technology and skills enhancement programs aimed at boosting productivity of apparel and textile makers.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II expressed confidence that the development package would ensure the survival of the industry after the United States abolishes its quotas in 2005.

"Within 34 months, we expect to have a competitive, viable and vibrant garments and textile export industry employing at least 400,000 workers with exports of at least $4 billion in 2005," Roxas said.

Although garments and textile are the country's second biggest dollar earner, the industry's performance has been largely dependent on quotas (accounting for 87 percent of the $3 billion in exports last year) most of which are granted by the US government.

Without an assured buyer for its products, the industry cannot compete with other garments and textile makers in the world, specifically from China, Bangladesh and Honduras, that produce cheaper, better quality, and more diverse line of clothes and fabrics at a shorter delivery time.

Roxas said the government has earmarked P300 million for programs that would upgrade the industry's skills and technology though the establishment of two training academies; trade facilitation to speed up delivery with the support of the Bureau of Customs; and market promotion efforts in the United States and Canada.

The GTEB has also negotiated for a P200-million loan facility and a P1-billion guarantee fund from Tidcorp to provide collateral-free loans to industry players, particularly small and medium enterprises.

The GTEB has also agreed to cut its fees charged on quota users by 30 percent. This is expected to generate P100 million in savings for the industry, which Roxas said the apparel and textile makers could spend on enhancing their operations.

Also, the GTEB has allocated a third of the annual incremental quota it gets from the United States to reward apparel and textile makers for beefing up their operations. It has likewise waived the penalties on industry players who fail to use up their quotas.

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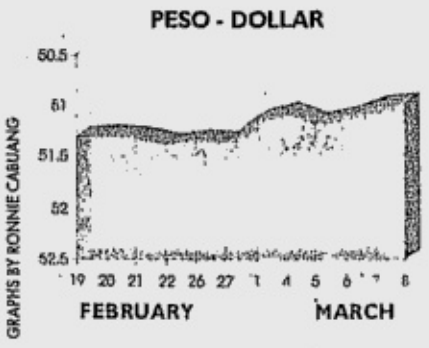
PESO - DOLLAR



GRAPHS BY RONNIE CABUANG

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

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As of 5 p.m., March 8, 2002

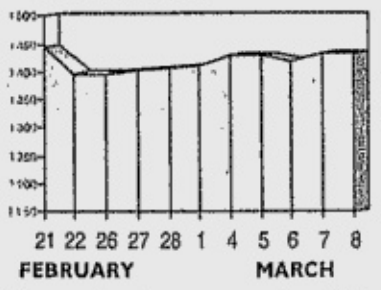
¥127.82 = $1
As of 5 p.m., March 8, 2002

GOLD: $288.10/288.50
per ounce Hong Kong, March 8, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Slow trading seen

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



THE MAIN local stock index is expected to continue consolidating above the 1,400 level this week as investors await a chance to take profits even as they continue to scout for good bargains.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index closed at 1,432.19 on Friday or 1.5 percent higher week-on-week.

SB Equities manager for institutional sales Monique Licaros said trading this week would likely be sluggish going to the long Holy Week break, but noted that investors were still willing to accumulate selective blue-chips at certain levels.

"We're at the crossroads. I think the 1,400 will hold because investors are still willing to buy," Licaros said, but noted that the market was hitting overbought levels and would need a respite very soon.

SLOW/ B4

(See stock market report on Page B8)

Gov't agencies to exercise put option on PAL shares

By Clarissa S. Batino

FIVE government financial institutions have decided to exercise their put option on Philippine Airlines in May and this would require Lucio Tan to cough up about P2 billion to honor the six-year-old deal.

Officials of Development Bank of the Philippines, the Land Bank, Philippine National Bank, the Government Service Insurance System, and the AFP-Retirement Service Benefits System met last Friday to discuss the put-option agreement they had with Tan on the PAL shares.

"We will exercise our put option on PAL by May and this would give all five of us a cumulative P2 billion," said outgoing DBP president Remedios Macalincag.

The five GFIs and Tan signed a put-option agreement in April 1996 requiring the latter to buy at P5 per share their remaining PAL shares after six years.

The par value of PAL was down to P1 each and the airline company continued to sustain losses despite having rationalized its operations.

The put-option agreement was a compromise reached by the two parties in December 1995 when the PAL board agreed to require existing shareholders to raise P3.4 billion in fresh capital to finance an ambitious re-fleeting program.

The state-run financial groups decided not to exercise their pre-emptive rights to the capital call.

In exchange for waiving their rights, the five GFIs asked Tan to enter into a put-option deal on PAL that would mature in May.

Macalincag said the five GFIs would split their P2 billion proceeds depending on their remaining shareholdings in the country's flag carrier. The government owns only 4.26 percent in PAL while Tan holds 88.94 percent. PAL employees account for 2.61 percent while other individuals believed to be related to the taipan group own the remaining

GOV'T/ B11

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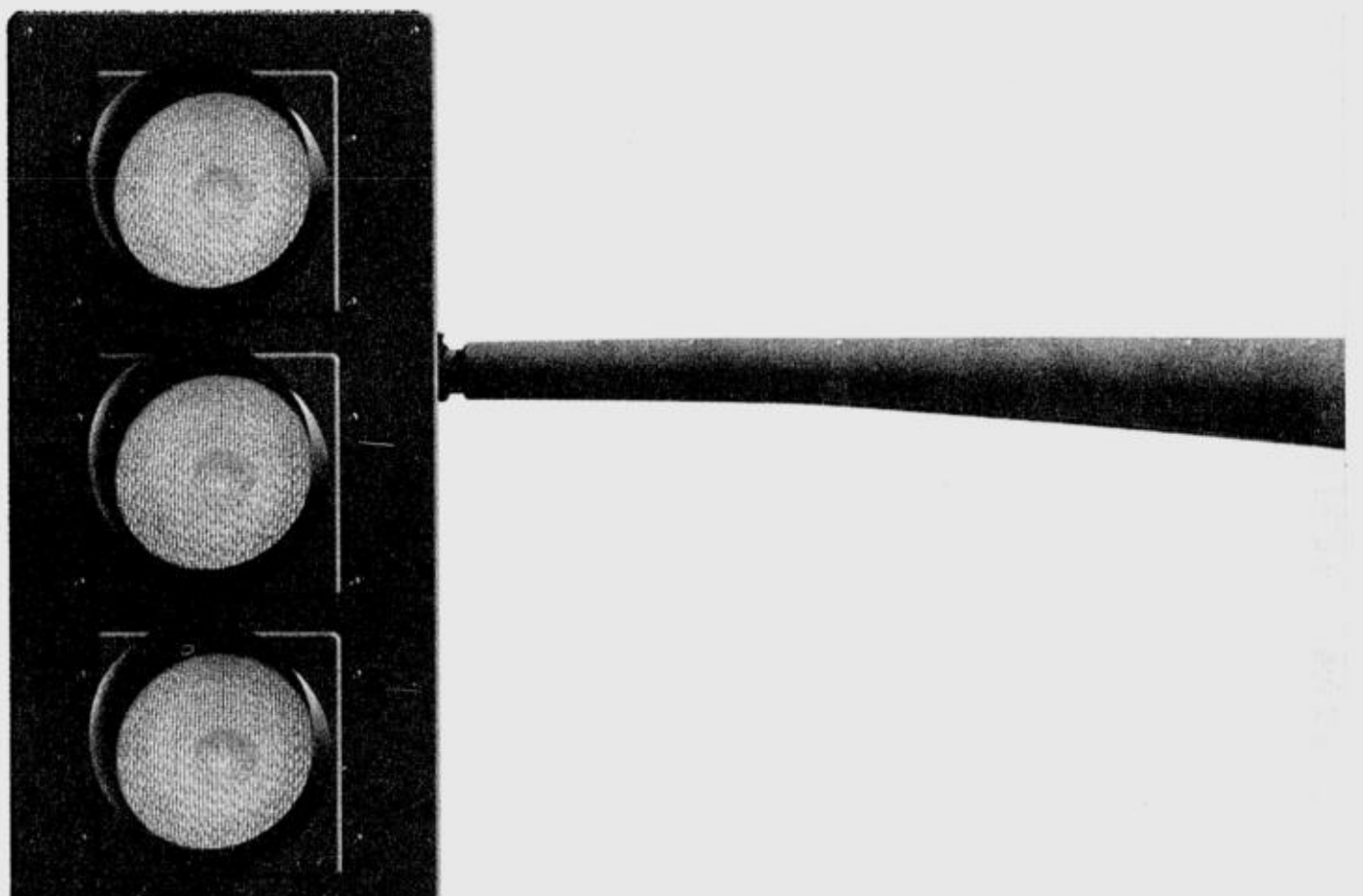

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Ramon's angst

TO ACCOMPANY last week's announcement that Ramon Ang had been appointed president of the country's largest food, beverage, and packaging company, the press office of San Miguel Corp. asked the new president/COO for a copy of his bio-data to be released to the media.

Instead of being obliged, as is customary for such a historic milestone, the San Miguel staff found themselves rebuffed. Apparently, the new SMC president does not relish the thought of his curriculum vitae being splashed in the papers.

Too bad. Ang has always prided himself in his entrepreneurial skills and his mechanical background, and last week's announcement would have been the perfect occasion to impress upon Juan de la Cruz that someone with limited educational background, who did not go to the right school, and who did not belong to the right club can still make it to the top of one of the country's most respected conglomerates.

Garbage lobbyists

IN THE MORNING of Feb. 25, Jancom officials met with the anti-Jancom lobbyists in the house of Hilarion Henares Jr. in Dasmariñas Village to see if they could iron out their differences.

The meeting came shortly before the Supreme Court handed out a decision removing a major legal stumbling block to the award of Metro Manila's multibillion-peso garbage contract to Jancom.

Among those present were Liwayway Vinzons-Chato, Gideon Javier, and Ana Ugarte, representing the NGO groups opposed to Jancom and incineration; Jose Luis "Nonoy" Yulo and a representative of Pastor "Boy" Saycon, representing other bidders, and Manuel Molina of Jancom and Louie Malixi, environmental consultant of Vivendi, the French principal of Jancom.

We cite this tidbit since the Chato group wrote to clarify a Heard Through the Grapevine item here (March 6, Cocktales) that their coalition is "in no way aligned with Mr. Yulo and his group." The Chato group also claimed that they had been responsible, not the Yulo group, for the media and Congress campaign hitting the Supreme Court decision.

Yulo, for his part, said the NGOs opposed to Jancom and incineration have been in the fight even before he himself went into the garbage disposal business.

Yulo, a former PSE president, said their Pro-Environment Consortium did not have any "Ging" in their organization, although, according to their incorporation papers, they have a John Joseph Gabriel Puzon, a brother of Erap pilot Frank Puzon, as the corporate treasurer when it was organized during Erap's time.

Gotianun's new tact

TAIPAN Andrew Gotianun is trying a new selling tact.

Instead of a fully developed housing subdivision, his Filinvest Land is offering a "farm-estate" in Tanza, Cavite, a 200-hectare subdivision divided into farm lots with sizes ranging from 750 to 2,000 square meters,

At P1,500 to P1,700 sq.m., a 1,000-sq.m. lot would cost anywhere from P1.5 million to P1.7 million.

With its cool climate and proximity to the sea, the Nusa Dua Farm Estate thinks it can attract gentlemen-farmers, retirees, and green thumb urbanites looking for a country escape.

Gotianun son, Andrew Jr., is in charge of Nusa Dua, so named because it will have a Balinese theme, "nusa dua" being Bahasa Indonesian for "authentic paradise" or "beautiful place."

Short takes

• DEOGRACIAS Vistan said in his resignation letter as president of Equitable-PCIBank that he was joining a government financial institution as a "consultant."

• THE SEQUESTERED United Coconuts Planters Bank has at least three high-ranking officers holding foreign passports, led by no less than its executive vice president Andrew Alcid, who is an American citizen. Needless to say, the three have proper working permits.

Heard through the grapevine

MALACAÑANG has released the appointment papers of Enrique Locsin (brother of Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr.) and Julio Jalandoni to replace the Erap appointees in the hotly contested board of the sequestered Philippine Communications Satellite Corp.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

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John Hay firm misses rent payment deadline

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE CONSORTIUM handling the John Hay tourism project has failed to meet a Feb. 28 deadline to settle P721.45 million in unpaid dues to the government since 1999.

A task force created to review the John Hay tourism project had earlier recommended the termination of the lease agreement in case of such failure to meet the payment deadline.

Confidential documents obtained by the INQUIRER showed that the task force created by Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) estate manager John Hay Poro Point Development Corp. (JPDC) warned against further concessions to the Fil-Estate-led consortium Camp John Hay Development Corp. (CJH).

The recommendation was contained in a memorandum submitted by the special committee on the John Hay project to the JPDC board dated Jan. 16, 2001.

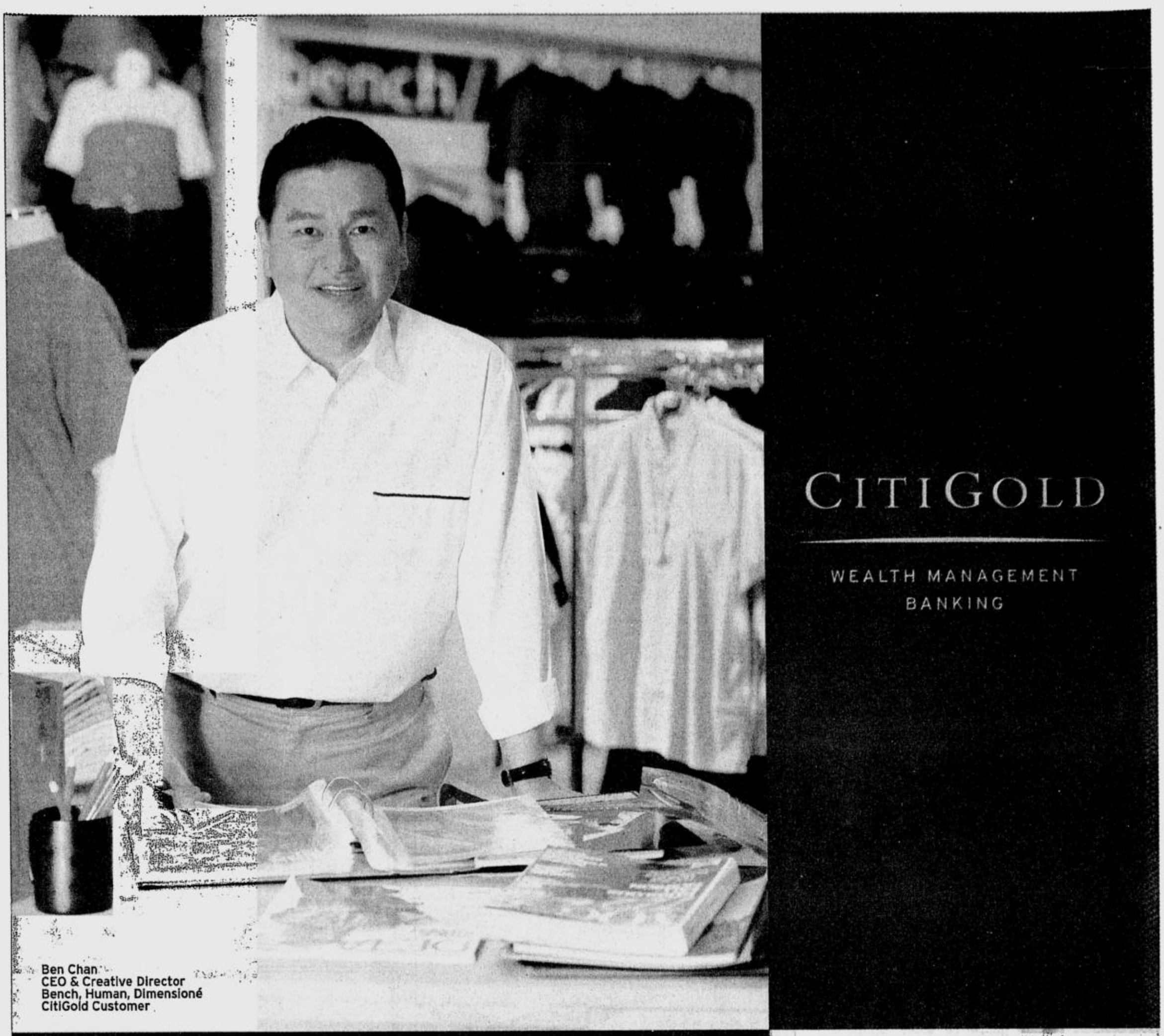
The end-February ultimatum was contained in the final demand letter dated Jan. 31 served by the BCDA on Fil-Estate group chair Robert John Sobrepeña seeking the payment of past due rentals for 1999 and 2000 amounting to P296.45 million, including interest, and another P425 million for the year 2001.

The JPDC report also noted that aside from non-payment of annual lease rentals, there were other violations that served as sufficient grounds to scrap the lease agreement with the Fil-Estate group:

• Shortfall in CJH's total commitment of P2.6 billion in investments;

• Assignment or sub-contracting on part of all of its obligations without the BCDA's consent, when CJH entered into a deed of assignment with Camp John Hay Golf Club Inc. for their shares in the golf course, and

JOHN/ B11



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Napocor idle assets to be sold

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE POWER Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. has started preparations for the sale of the idle assets of National Power Corp. These will be on top of Napocor's transmission and generation assets that Psalm will also sell soon.

Psalm president Edgardo del Fonso said Psalm was planning to hire a private appraisal company to prepare for the sale of assets that were not essential to the operations of Napocor and National Transmission Corp.

These include parcels of land originally intended as sites of Napocor power plants such as those in Makati, Sucat, Intramuros and Quezon City.

Psalm has yet to determine the value of these assets but Del Fonso said they accounted for one to 3 percent of Napocor's total asset base.

Napocor data showed that its asset base amounted to P989 billion as of end-2000. The minor assets considered for sale were valued at about P22 billion early last year.

"We are going to hire a private appraisal company that should start going over these assets anytime soon," Del Fonso said.

"Our initial focus are the major assets but once Napocor's privatization plan was approved, we will turn our attention to the other assets," he added.

Del Fonso said the sale of the minor assets might start late this year simultaneous to the privatization of the power plants.

"Because of the extensive holdings of Napocor, we plan to work with some brokers to help us conduct the bidding for the minor assets," Del Fonso said. "We are not going to go through negotiations."

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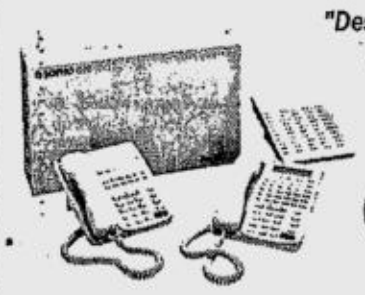

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Slow trading . . .

From page B1

First Orient Securities trader Rolly Pineda said the market would still benefit from investors' appetite for blue chips, which he stressed should provide a good foundation for the market, which has been on an uptrend since mid-November last week.

Pineda said he was optimistic that the 1,400 level would hold, but noted a stronger support level at 1,390. He said trading would likely be mixed as most of the good news like the slowdown in interest rates and the stable peso had been discounted by the market last week.

"Investors are looking forward to corporate earnings reports," Pineda said. "I'd like to believe that there might be positive surprises within the month and the index will target 1,500."

Eagle Equities president Joseph Roxas said the Phisix could still inch up by 20-30 points this week, but noted that the market would still have to see some downward correction soon.

"There's still some foreign buying but the locals are not following. So I think that trading among local investors will be dominated by (speculative) stocks this month," he explained.

Summit Securities president Harry Liu projected that the market would move sideways this week but with some upward bias.

In terms of specific stocks, SB Equity's Licaros said investors were still willing to accumulate shares of SM Prime Holdings Inc. and Ayala Land Inc. She also noted that the market seemed to be betting that Meralco would finally get its much-needed rate increase.

However, she said trading volume would likely taper off ahead of the long Holy Week break as some investors and fund managers go on a vacation mode.

First Orient's Pineda said the consolidation would likely continue within the next two to three weeks.

"The good things is that there has been a change of hands from the pundits or short-term players to long-term investors," he said.

Doris Dumlao

Why is retirement compulsory?

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

COMPULSORY retirement from work by reason of age is discriminatory. In fact, it violates an older person's human rights.

Three associate justices of the Supreme Court are being let off this year when they reach the compulsory retirement age of 70. This rule is, in itself, discriminatory, because all other government employees retire compulsorily at 65.

The special rule on the judiciary is based on the assumption that judges grow in wisdom as the years pass. Agreed, so why retire at 70? Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote brilliant decisions until he died at 91. Our retired justices open up a practice, teach law, write a column, or defend a former president, all the while enjoying a pension more generous than those of other government retirees.

But there are a host of other government jobs where the occupant is more useful with age. To mention a few: a university professor, a research scientist, a register of deeds, a diplomat, an internist. I can make a good case even for a filing clerk.

In the private sector, retirement is usually at age 60. When I started working for a living 50 years ago at the FGU Insurance Group, the retirement age had just been brought down from 65 to 60. The rule applied to the rest of the Ayala companies. This was to show the young employees that they did not have to wait very long to move up. In other words, the older employees were to be retired earlier to make room for the younger generation. Wasn't that discriminatory as well?

As it turned out, the company grew so fast that all over the organizational chart, new executive positions opened up. The younger generation did not have to wait for some old codger to retire in order to move up. Those who did retire ended selling insurance on commission, just to keep busy.

Compulsory retirement at any age would not be so bad if a retiree receives a comfortable pension. But the average pension for members of the Social Security System is about 65 percent below minimum wage. This is not even enough to pay for medicine. One has to be employed with a firm that has a generous pension plan to add to the SSS plan. Otherwise, you end up living on the generosity of your children.

But over and above everything else is the depressing feeling that, after years of productive work, an employee is treated like an old carabao no longer strong enough to pull a plow or a harrow and is put out to grass. In fact, most retirees at age 60 or even 65 or 70 can still be as productive as the younger generation. Oh, sure, their reflexes may have slowed down, but they make for it with their experience. They may no longer be able to fly a plane but they can fly a desk. They may no longer be able to operate a lathe, but they can still operate a laptop.

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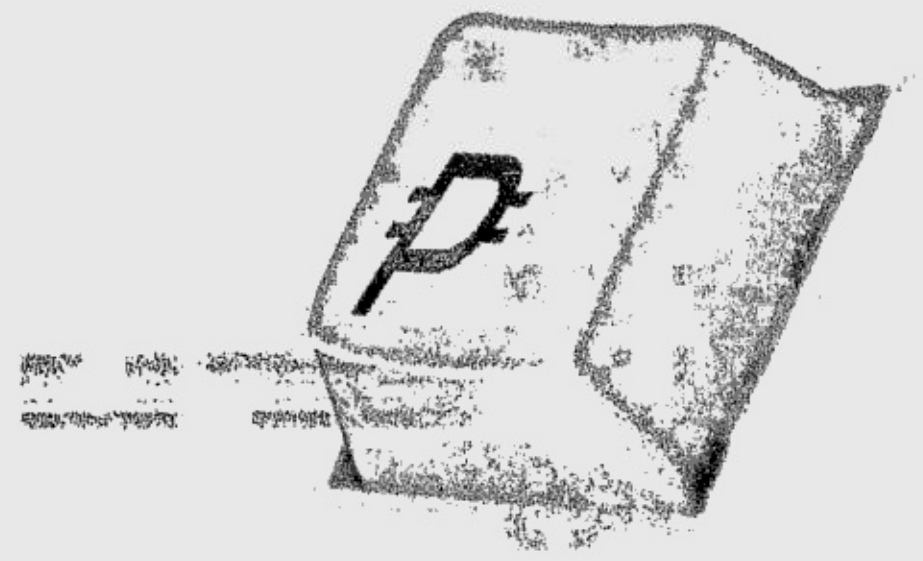

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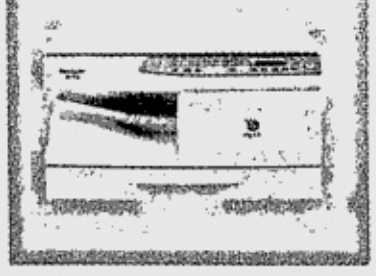

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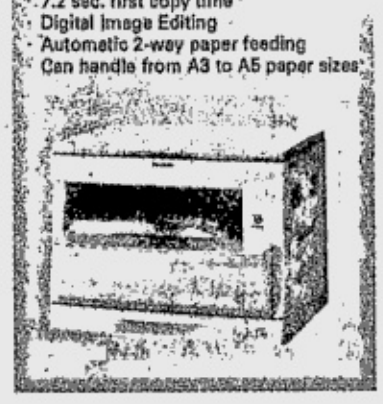

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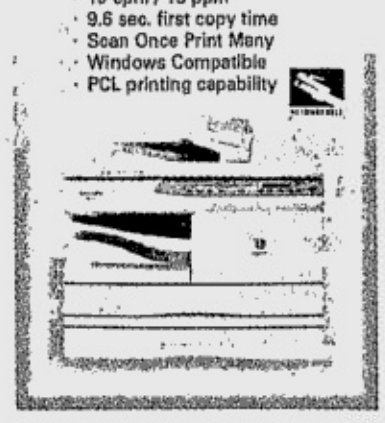

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Sugar producers seek tariff cover against imports

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE COUNTRY'S sugar barons are asking the Macapagal administration to raise tariff walls not only on sugar imports but also on substitute sweeteners, specifically fructose.

The move is likely to sour up the operations of heavy users of fructose such as beverage makers and food processors.

Trade Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said the sugar producers, represented by the Sugar Alliance of the Philippines and the Philippine Sugar Millers Association, have petitioned the Cabinet-level Tariff and Related Matters to increase duties on fructose from 7 percent to as much as 50 percent.

The sugar producers apparently considered fructose—a liquid sweetener made from fruits and honey—a threat. "A teaspoon of fructose is equivalent to 2 teaspoons of sugar," Roxas said.

But Roxas said that the country imports a minimal amount of fructose because it is three times more expensive than sugar. Roxas said the TRM has agreed to study the sugar producers' request along with the industry's previous appeal to lobby in the Asean to keep the prohibitive duties on sugar until 2010.

Roxas had earlier successfully lobbied in the Asean Free Trade Agreement (Afta) Council to allow the Philippines to defer tariff cuts on sugar imports, which was supposed to start next year, despite stiff opposition from Thailand.

The Philippines is scheduled to phase down the current duty on sugar—ranging from 50 to 65 percent—starting in 2003 to a maximum of 5 percent by 2010. Roxas said a delay in the phase down would allow sugar millers to boost their operations before opening the markets to other producers in the region.

The sugar producers have likewise asked the government to reclassify sugar as a highly sensitive commodity in order to keep its tariffs at high levels. Only rice is considered a highly sensitive commodity.

Roxas had admitted that the tariff protection extended to the sugar industry would mean opening up other industries to imports to compensate other Asean countries, like Thailand which had opposed the Philippines' bid because a delay would force it to wait longer before it could send its excess sugar to these countries. Thailand is a major supplier of sugar into the country with its substantially lower prices.

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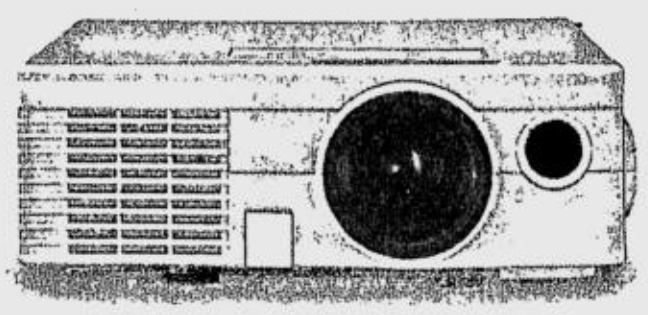

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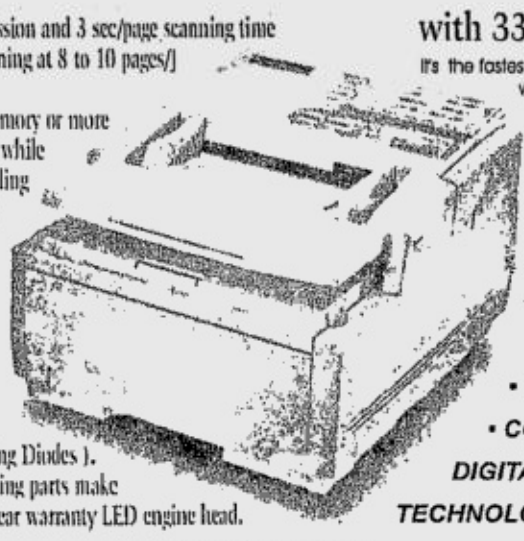

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Growth hopes soar as key signs sparkle

FRANKFURT—Global growth hopes capped an upbeat week with more good news on Friday which, putting US steel tariffs aside, adds up to a decisive recovery.

A closely watched barometer of the world business cycle from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development jumped in January for the third straight month, while February employment in the United States rose for the first time in seven months.

Investors endorsed the news with a fresh rally on Wall Street, advancing gains made in world stock markets as the mood brightened and chimed with assurances from both the Federal Reserve and European Central Bank that growth was on the mend.

"This week has provided clear-cut evidence (of recovery). It was also the week in which investors began to believe their own economists," said Michael Saunders, chief European economist at Schroder Salomon Smith Barney in London.

The Tuesday decision of US President George W Bush to impose tariffs of up to 30 percent on a range of steel imports may have sparked fears of an escalation into a full-blown trade war. But the story told by the data was altogether upbeat.

In Paris the OECD said that its composite leading indicator for the OECD area rose to 114.5 in January from 113.4 in December, and 111.1 in October after the air attacks in the United States.

In Washington, the Labor Department said US unemployment shrank to 5.5 percent last month from 5.6 percent in January.

Japan's economy continued to shrink, data released on Friday showed, but Economy Minister Heizo Takenaka said the economy probably turned the corner in the fourth quarter.

"I am encouraged by unfolding events, no doubt about it," said Joseph Quinlan at Morgan Stanley in New York, although he warned firms still faced a tough profit environment, and stronger end-demand would be needed to complete the recovery picture.

Buy, buy, buy

This has not deterred investors. The Commodity Research Bureau (CBR) index hit a six-month high this week, money flooded into US junk bonds and stock markets around the world took heart.

This saw the MSCI All World Free equity index post a 5.5-percent gain in five days to Thursday, just the sixth time since 1991 that equities have moved so strongly ahead on this measure.

"The recent evidence increasingly suggests that an economic expansion is already well under way, although an array of influences unique to this business cycle seem likely to moderate its speed," Federal Reserve chair Alan Greenspan said on Thursday. ***Reuters***

JAPANESE pedestrians walk past an electronic stock board at the end of a work week in downtown Tokyo Friday. The Nikkei average rose Friday despite news that Japan has toppled into its worst recession in at least two decades as its economy shrank for the third straight quarter.

US Congress approves economic stimulus bill to help jobless

WASHINGTON—Congress Friday gave final approval to a bill extending unemployment benefits and giving modest business tax breaks sought by the battered high-tech industry in a vastly scaled back economic stimulus measure.

The Senate approved the measure 85-9 a day after a 417-3 vote in the House of Representatives, sending it to the White House for the president's signature.

The bill is estimated to pump as much as $94 billion into the economy over five years; but because it also raises some revenues, the cost over 10 years is estimated at $42 billion.

President George W. Bush, who has argued that a stimulus bill was needed despite signs of economic recovery, pledged to sign the measure.

"I look forward to signing it. It is a good piece of news for workers and entrepreneurs alike," Bush said on a visit to Florida.

The legislation was stripped of contentious accelerated income tax cuts and corporate tax incentives in earlier stimulus proposals, but extends unemployment benefits and includes some limited business tax breaks.

Lawmakers were under pressure to pass such a measure with thousands of people who lost their jobs as a result of the Sept. 11 attacks scheduled to lose unemployment benefits after six months.

Also included in the bill were measures sought by the battered high-tech industry, allowing a "carry-back" of losses for five years and faster depreciation write-offs for some investments.

Backers say the move will help stimulate investment, particularly in information technology, which has been in a deep slump.

"With IT spending growth in the US barely registering a blip on the economic radar screen, this action is a much needed shot in the arm," said Harris Miller, president of the Information Technology Association of America.

"Provisions of the bill will allow buyers of IT to depreciate those assets more quickly in line with the actual useful life of those investments. We think this change will help motivate IT customers to pull the wraps off their capital spending budgets and jump-start IT projects which have been delayed, deferred or cancelled."

The bill also includes some tax relief for New York City to help its recovery from the Sept. 11 attacks that destroyed the World Trade Center towers and caused a massive shock to the economy. Congress had been deadlocked for months on a stimulus plan aimed at helping the economy pull out of recession. ***AFP***

Japanese minister says recession will not worsen

TOKYO—Japan is unlikely to see a worse economic decline in the March quarter after a 1.2-percent quarter-on-quarter contraction in the three months to December, a senior economic minister said Friday.

"I have a feeling that January-March GDP (gross domestic product) will not worsen further from the October-December result," state minister for economic and fiscal policy Heizo Takenaka told a news conference.

He said the government was "focusing on the timing of a bottoming in the economy, amid continuing weakness in production."

The government earlier confirmed Japan had recorded a third straight quarter of decline in the worst nine months of recession on record.

"We have to admit that the economic situation is in no way good," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasuo Fukuda told reporters.

"The point is whether supplementary budgets (for the current financial year ending in March) will have an effect on the economy from now," he said, referring to the two stimulatory packages announced for the current year.

Takenaka said the government did not need to further boost spending to prompt an economic recovery, adding that consumer spending was better than expected, up 1.9 percent in the three months to December.

"We are now seeing some signs of life for future economic activity, so it would be the wrong time to decide to expand fiscal spending, because there is a lag before the effects of past measures will come through," he said. ***AFP***

Calpers to vote against HP-Compaq merger

SAN FRANCISCO—US pension fund giant Calpers said on Friday it will vote against Hewlett-Packard Co.'s $22-billion bid to buy Compaq Computer Corp., dealing an unexpected blow to HP chief executive Carly Fiorina's drive to push through the biggest merger in computer industry history.

The California Public Employees Retirement System, or Calpers, said it opposed the deal in part due to the high premium being paid for Compaq and the risk that competitors would eat into market share while the two firms combine their businesses.

While Calpers holds stakes of less than one percent in both companies, the pension fund's moves are closely watched in debt and equity markets and their decision to oppose the merger could sway undecided investors before they vote on March 19.

"It is important to state this decision is not a referendum on HP's management team or its CEO Carly Fiorina," Calpers said in a statement. "Rather it is solely based on the merits of this transaction as it relates to Calpers portfolio."

Calpers' decision came after Institutional Shareholder Services, an influential independent institutional investment advisory firm, declared support for the purchase Tuesday—a move which emboldened HP's management to claim they had seized momentum in the merger battle. ***Reuters***

Sun files antitrust lawsuit vs software giant Microsoft

NEW YORK—Microsoft Corp.'s most vocal rival, Sun Microsystems Inc., on Friday filed an antitrust lawsuit against the software giant, claiming its business was damaged by Microsoft's abusive monopoly.

The suit, filed in US District Court in San Jose, California, seeks damages of more than $1 billion, Sun General Counsel Michael Morris said. Under antitrust legislation, the courts would triple that award, he said.

In Oct. 2001, Microsoft began shipping its Windows XP operating system without support for Sun's Java software programming language, Morris said, a move that has damaged Sun's computer server business.

"Our suit seeks compensation from Microsoft for illegally impeding Sun's business and harming the Java platform—acts that Microsoft was found guilty of in federal court in Washington, (D.C.)," Michael Morris, general counsel for Santa Clara, California-based Sun, said in a conference call with analysts and reporters.

Microsoft spokesperson Jim Desler called the issues old news.

"It's time to move past these issues, many of which are related to a lawsuit the parties settled last year," Desler said.

Redmond, Washington-based Microsoft has been found to have violated antitrust law in a landmark case brought by the federal government and state attorneys general. It also faces private antitrust suits from consumers and from the world's largest Internet media company AOL Time Warner.

No surprise

In the suit, Sun called for Microsoft to disclose and license the underlying computer code and information related to products such as Internet Explorer and its latest Internet technology—Net.Sun—a manufacturer of large computers used to manage corporate networks—and Microsoft have had a bitter relationship for many years.

In 1997, Sun filed a case against the software giant, saying Microsoft violated its copyright licensing agreement for Java, a "write once, run anywhere" computer language that lets software run on a variety of operating systems.

Sun chief executive Scott McNealy has been known to poke fun of Microsoft, calling the Windows operating system "a hairball."

Morris said he hopes to have a hearing in April and have a response from the courts within a year to its request that Microsoft begin including its Java software on Windows XP.

The move wasn't a surprise to Microsoft watchers, who have been keeping a close eye on the continuing court cases. ***Reuters***

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Celebrity	175,000		
Club Filipino	200,000		
CC at Tagaytay Highland	429,000		
Eagle Ridge A	340,000		
Fontana	80,000		
Forest Hill *A/C	220,000/290,000		
Manila Golf Corp	10,550M		
Manila Polo	2.7M		
Manila Southwods *A/B	640/700,000		
Mt. Malarayat *A/C	350,000/550,000		
Orchard *A/C	220,000/330,000		
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Calatagan Golf Club "A"	70,000	90,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	80,000	100,000
Camp John Hay	Please Call	280,000
Canlubang	500,000	600,000
Canyonwoods	Please Call	330,000
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Celebrity Sports Club	165,000	190,000
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Eastridge "A"	Please Call	Please Call
Evercrest "A"	-	100,000
Forest Hills "A"	200,000	230,000
Forest Hills "B"	250,000	280,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	290,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	250,000	280,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	270,000	375,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	12,500,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,000,000	Please Call
Manila Polo	2,500,000	2,750,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	600,000	650,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	700,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	100,000	150,000
Montemar (Individual)	-	30,000
Mt. Malarayat	-	Please Call
Orchard Golf Club "A"	200,000	250,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	250,000	300,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	310,000	500,000
Philippine Columbian	75,000	85,000
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Puerto Azul	-	125,000
Quezon City Sports Club	200,000	230,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"	-	Please Call
Rockwell	Please Call	550,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	150,000
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Sta. Elena "B"	2,000,000	Please Call
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	330,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	160,000
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Tagaytay Highlands	650,000	Please Call
Tagaytay Midlands	750,000	-
The Country Club	Please Call	Please Call
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Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,800,000	7,500,000

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Eastridge "A"	20,000	Tagaytay CC	20,000
Forest Hills	30,000	Tagaytay Golf	45,000
Manila Southwoods	20,000	Tagaytay Mid.	35,000
Makati Sports "A"	25,000	Valley Golf	20,000
Manila Golf	300,000	Wack-Wack	90,000

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4. CAPITOL HILLS GOLF CLUB	-	110,000.00
5. CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	160,000.00	-
6. COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY	-	400,000.00
7. CLUB FILIPINO	220,000.00	-
8. EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB	200,000.00	-
9. EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "B"	-	120,000.00
10. FONTANA "D"	100,000.00	-
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12. FOREST HILLS GOLF CLUB "A"	210,000.00	200,000.00
13. FOREST HILLS GOLF CLUB "B"	-	250,000.00
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26. STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	1,900,000.00	1,750,000.00
27. STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "B"	-	2,000,000.00
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30. TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS GOLF CLUB	-	730,000.00
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GMA AT EASTWOOD CYBERPARK
President Macapagal-Arroyo listens in on a conversation between a customer service associate from Customer Contact Center (C3), a Lopez-owned call center firm headquartered at the Eastwood City CyberPark, and a client based abroad. Ms Macapagal was the guest of honor during the recent formal inauguration of the Eastwood Locators' Assistance Center, the CyberPark's premier investor relations hub. With the President are (from left) Megaworld Corp. chair and president Andrew Tan (partly hidden), Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr., Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel Roxas II and Customer Contact Center president Karen Batungbakal.

Firm sees continued glut in office space

By Doris C. Dumlao

CLOSE to a third of space offered by office and residential buildings in the country's prime business districts in Makati and Ortigas are still likely to remain vacant this year, thus inducing a further fall in rent and capital values by 10-15 percent, according to global property consultancy firm FPDSavills.

In its latest property report covering the fourth quarter of 2001, FPDSavills said demand for high-rise buildings continued to be sluggish while supply remained abundant even as the Philippines has managed to escape an economic slowdown.

The report also noted the emergence of a trend of "flight to quality" in the office sector as occupants preferred to move to "Grade A" spaces while the residential sector, on the other hand, was still locked in a consolidation phase.

"Tenants of lower grade buildings as well as new companies preferred to move to newer developments to capitalize on state-of-the-art facilities, better location and accessibility and lower rental rates (and incentives)," the report said.

In 2001, 66 percent of the total transacted office space in the Makati and Ortigas CBDs were all in the Grade "A" office sector compared with 34 percent in lower grade office buildings.

"Though refurbishment and renovations are currently ongoing in lower grade buildings, FPDSavills Research expects a continual exodus of tenants from these developments to prime office space," it said.

From November to December last year, the report said office space take-up fell by 12 percent from the same period last year to 18,909 sq.m. mainly due to the decline in demand in December in both the Makati and Ortigas CBDs by 28 percent.

Interestingly, however, there was a moderate 4-percent increase in occupancy for the month of November 2001, coinciding with the resurgence of investor confidence as reflected by the rebound in the stock market since the middle of that month.

For the whole of 2001, FPDSavills estimated that consolidated vacancy for all office grades for both CBDs would hit 27 percent and projected a further rise to 28 percent this year in view of weak demand. Occupancy would likely improve only by 2003, the report said, once supply started to tighten.

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(As of Friday, March 8, 2002)

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BANKS					
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	100	100	100	100	300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	70	70	69.5	70	357,700
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	32.5	32.5	32	32.5	546,700
First E-Bank Corp.	2.4	2.95	2.4	2.8	2,079,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	44	46	44	45.5	442,600
Philippine National Bank	62	62.5	62	62	4,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	12.75	12.75	12.5	12.5	16,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	21.75	21.75	21.5	21.75	53,200
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	300,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1380	1390	1380	1390	500
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1055	1055	1045	1065	58,860
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	33	33	33	33	10,700
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.73	0.73	4,450,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	800	800	800	800	8,490
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0675	0.0675	0.0675	0.0675	13,600,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	100,000
Pldt	0.5	0.5	0.48	0.48	4,000,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	525	525	510	515	73,630
Ivantage Corp.	0.55	0.6	0.55	0.6	420,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	45,900,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	32.5	33	32.5	32.5	210,400
Manila Electric Co. B	48.5	48.5	48.5	48.5	3,347,400
Patron Corp.	1.92	1.92	1.86	1.86	4,088,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.14	1.16	1.14	1.16	108,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	1,015,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	10,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	20,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9	5,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	100,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.62	0.62	0.62	0.62	100,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.12	2.12	126,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	5,000
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	23.5	23.5	23	23	178,300
RFM Corp.	1.52	1.66	1.52	1.62	7,172,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.9	2.65	1.9	2.3	495,000
San Miguel Corp. A	48	48.5	48	48.5	1,043,500
San Miguel Corp. B	65.5	65.5	65.5	65.5	270,000
Universal Robina Corp.	5	5	4.9	4.9	5,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	30,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.8	555,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.06	2.1	2.06	2.06	529,000
Ajo.Nat Holdings Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.77	0.77	650,000
APC Group Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.135	0.135	900,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	59,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	160,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.8	3.6	3.65	966,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.84	0.84	0.81	0.81	3,510,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	50,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	370,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	300,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	2,590,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	800,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	481,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	30,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	33	33.5	32.5	32.5	388,800
Global Equities Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.155	0.155	940,000
Ionics Inc.	7.9	8	7.9	8	7,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	25,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	1,000,000
Medco Holdings	0.18	0.2	0.18	0.2	1,260,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.86	0.87	8,530,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.62	0.7	0.62	0.7	400,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	3,000,000
Music Corp.	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.32	2,510,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.88	0.9	0.88	0.9	230,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.37	200,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	50,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	13,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	30,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.26	0.3	0.26	0.3	120,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	7,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	150,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14	14	14	14	8,500
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.52	0.52	4,420,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	100,000
Manila Jockey Club	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	16,000
Mondragon Intl Phils Inc.	0.38	0.49	0.38	0.43	1,680,000
Philippine Racing Club	4	4.2	4	4.2	4,750,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	28,400
DMCI Holdings Inc- Pref.	795	795	795	795	200
Equitable Pci Bank-War	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	13,000
Globe Telecom Hldg (Pdr)	790	790	790	790	690
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0014	0.0016	0.0014	0.0016	18,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series N	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
Philweb.Com Inc. -Warrants	0.006	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	87,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7	7	7	7	10,325,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.2	0.24	0.2	0.23	410,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	2,320,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.52	0.52	3,510,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	3,020,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.3	2.3	2.22	2.22	5,882,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	60,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.4	0.42	0.4	0.41	980,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1	1.04	66,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.8	3,885,000
MINING					
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.04	0.04	0.039	0.039	5,700,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.215	0.215	0.21	0.21	900,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.225	0.225	0.215	0.22	3,680,000
Omico Corp.	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	4,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	2,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	500,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0055	0.0056	0.0055	0.0055	67,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	61,000,000
Pacifica	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	6,900,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.0725	0.0725	0.07	0.07	4,400,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.2	1,420,000

	SHARE	$	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	3,859,860		132,909,550.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	292,714,110		380,619,860.00
PRO	30,458,000		115,642,200.00
Mining	16,780,000		1,399,000.00
OIL	140,720,000		1,407,650.00
GRAND TOTALS :	484,531,970		631,978,260.00

AVERAGES

Banks & Fin Svc	584.61	UP 5.05
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,949.14	DOWN 3.24
PRO	627.16	DOWN 1.81
Mining	1,390.57	DOWN 41.25
OIL	1.88	DOWN 0.01
All Shares Index	768.49	DOWN 7.53
Composite	1,432.19	DOWN 0.37

NO. OF ADVANCES: 26; NO. OF DECLINES: 36; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 50; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 112; NO. OF TRADES: 2,521

CURRENCIES

March 8, 2002 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.133144	1.000000	51.0070
Japan	Yen	0.008910	0.007863	0.4011
United Kingdom	Pound	1.618584	1.428400	72.8584
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.145290	0.128218	6.5400
Switzerland	Franc	0.679343	0.599520	30.5797
Canada	Dollar	0.715730	0.631632	32.2177
Singapore	Dollar	0.623703	0.550418	28.0752
Australia	Dollar	0.594826	0.524934	26.7753
Bahrain	Dinar	3.005848	2.652661	135.3043
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.302155	0.266652	13.6011
Brunei	Dollar	0.619882	0.547046	27.9032
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000114	0.000101	0.0052
Thailand	Baht	0.026212	0.023132	1.1799
UAE	Dirham	0.308524	0.272272	13.8878
Korea	Won	0.000869	0.000767	0.0391
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.882500	45.0137
Brazil	Real	0.480146	0.423729	21.6131
Denmark	Kroner	0.134594	0.118779	6.0586
India	Rupee	0.023287	0.020551	1.0482
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.298196	0.263158	13.4229
Mexico	New Peso	0.124871	0.110199	5.6209
New Zealand	Dollar	0.487710	0.430404	21.9536
Norway	Kroner	0.129496	0.11428	5.8291
Pakistan	Rupee	0.108902	0.016681	0.8508
South Africa	Rand	0.097696	0.086217	4.3977
Sweden	Kroner	0.110271	0.097314	4.9637
Syria	Pound	0.022088	0.019493	0.9943
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032478	0.028662	1.4620
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001163	0.001026	0.0523

The rest of the 10 commandments

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

BY A STRANGE coincidence, my colleague was reading "New Market Wizards" which is the sequel I referred to last week. Mr. Schwager gives an enormous amount of personal detail on each person interviewed and those who declined to make their identity known are deleted from the book. I understand from an unreliable source that these included a sadist who lived on battered prawns, mashed potatoes, whipped cream and sham pain. As you may have guessed, he dealt in Bonds. Another was a transvestite who purposefully put his/her clothes on backward to avoid recognition. But they all cut their losses quickly.

In his introduction, the author writes "If you are unwilling to accept small losses, then sooner or later, you will have the mother of all losses."

DO NOT AVERAGE DOWN. Actually, this is superfluous because, if you cut losses quickly, you cannot be in a position where you have a big loss, and want to average down. Adding to a losing position is like pouring money into an unprofitable business. It doesn't make sense. Better to average up because you are on the right side of the trend and "the trend is your friend." Swim with the current, not against it.

Sometimes, people ask me how much do I charge for managing their investments. The answer is that there is no fee provided they will tell me what is their risk tolerance, the maximum they can stand to lose on any stock. It can be anywhere between 5 percent and 20 percent (mine is one percent) and they must agree that we will put a stop loss and implement it, no matter what. For example, if you have P100,000 divided into 5 positions, if one falls 10 percent and you cut it, your overall loss is 2 percent of your capital, excluding expenses. This does not hurt you. What hurts is when you hold on and lose 50 percent.

DO NOT CHASE PRICES. If you miss a BUY signal and it goes through the roof, wait. If you are lucky, it will pull back and you can get in at a reasonable price. If not, there are plenty of other stocks out there.

DO NOT TRADE ON TIPS. In England, we say, "where there's a tip, there's a tap." I suppose in American English you would say "there's a faucet," but it does not sound right. It means that somebody is trying to get you to buy so that they can sell at a higher price.

DO NOT BUY TOO MANY STOCKS. I was recently given a portfolio worth P50,000 containing 32 stocks. This is ridiculous. You cannot follow them all and even if one holding doubled, it would not make much difference. Keep your investments down to a size you can manage. For a million pesos, five or six stocks are enough.

DO NOT OVERTRADE. If you are buying and selling every day and making money, then you must be a genius. Transaction costs, particularly in this country, are very high. Suppose you buy 500,000 ELI at 32 centavos for P160,000. Commission is 0.5 percent plus VAT = P880. The documentary stamp is 0.75 percent of its par value, P1, not its price, so that amounts to P3,750. When you sell, you again pay commission plus VAT, say P880 and the sales tax which is 0.5 percent of the value, P800. Also, the spread between bid and offer is one centavo which is another P5,000, so your total expense is P11,310. Even if you sell at 34 centavos, you will still lose money so you need three fluctuations to show a tiny profit. Your expenses amount to just over 7 percent. The highly profitable casinos in Las Vegas make fortunes on the roulette wheel with a smaller percentage than that.

The market spends 70 percent of its time consolidating so you should be out of it much of the time. Masterly inactivity is the name of the game and patience is not a virtue but a necessity.

BUY LOW PRICED STOCKS. It is much easier for a P1 stock to double than say Globe at P800. Low priced stock have much greater volatility but this is a two edged sword so you

THE REST/ B11

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Equitable pursuing plan to go regional

By Clarissa S. Batino

EQUITABLE PCI Bank officials have vowed to pursue the bank's vision to become a regional player and establish a stronger foothold in the local market even after the resignation last week of seasoned banker Deogracias Vistan.

However, near-term plans to raise capital and dispose of bad assets through an asset management company, which were among the strategies drawn during the short-lived term of Vistan, have now become uncertain.

Equitable PCI chair Antonio Go said the bank would still pursue a plan to accept new capital investors through the so-called tier 2 scheme.

"The plans under the term of Mr. Vistan will still be pursued," said Go who denied that he disagreed with Vistan's decisions and management style, prompting the banker to cut short his

EQUITABLE/ B15

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Monsanto bullish on RP agricultural production

GLOBAL agricultural technology firm Monsanto recently expressed optimism on the prospects of the country to attain self-sufficiency in the supply of staple food products.

Monsanto government and public affairs director Noel Borlongan said the introduction of modern agricultural technology plus a strong government support for the agricultural sector augur well for the country's food sufficiency program.

Monsanto, a multibillion-dollar company based in St. Louis, Missouri, has been in the Philippines for 30 years now. It introduced a hybrid corn variety in the country, which, together with other hybrids, replaced most low-yielding and pest-prone open-pollinated varieties.

Borlongan said Monsanto had been conducting field tests for a new 'transgenic' corn variety called Bt-corn. He added that based on the wet season trial results, Bt-corn could increase average farm yield by 10 to 40 percent.

Bt-corn has been planted in 10 test sites all over the country. The tests are scheduled for completion by the middle of this year, Borlongan said.

The Bt-corn variety has already been successfully commercialized in other countries, including Canada, Argentina and the United States. The variety, besides its high-yield, also effectively controls corn borers. Corn borers are the biggest enemies of corn plants. Monsanto's modern biotechnological research enabled the development of this pest-resistant variety seen as a major boost to local environmental protection.

Borlongan explained that the introduction of the Bt variety could dramatically improve the performance by 10 to 40 percent. This significant increase can be achieved and will radically reduce pesticide application, he pointed out.

Borlongan said that on the average, the Philippines imports 300,000 to 500,000 metric tons of corn annually. Initial results from Monsanto trials, both from the limited field trial and the multi-location trials, point to the potential for significant increases in yields of yellow corn and reduce dependence on importation.

GOINGS-ON

Wavenet- Eastern Telecoms deal

WAVENET Philippines Inc., the Internet arm of Capwire Telecoms and PT&T, entered into a peering arrangement with the more than 30 members of Eastern Telecom's Manila Internet Exchange (MIX), the country's biggest local Internet exchange.

Angelo C. Molato, chief operating officer of Eastern Telecoms, and Maureen Santiago, assistant vice president and chief operating officer of Wavenet, signed the agreement.

"This peering agreement further binds the vast network connecting various businesses together. Information is delivered more efficiently and swiftly, ultimately resulting in quicker decision-making," Molato added.

The objective of peering is to encourage the development of local content in the country, says Eastern Telecoms VP for Internet Joevel Rivera.

Co-ops, SMEs fair

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry is moving to affect mindsets of cooperative groups to generate business from mainstream and global markets.

This thrust is to be pursued as the DTI provides vital marketing assistance to cooperatives and SMEs through market and trade encounters during the 2nd Cooperatives and SMEs Trade Fair (CSTF) at the Megatrade Hall 1, Building B of the SM Megamall on March 21 to 24.

All DTI regional directors have been directed to aggressively campaign for the participation in the fair of cooperatives in their respective areas.

The directive is contained in a memo signed by Director Rhodora Leano of the Bureau of Domestic Trade Promotions (BDTP).

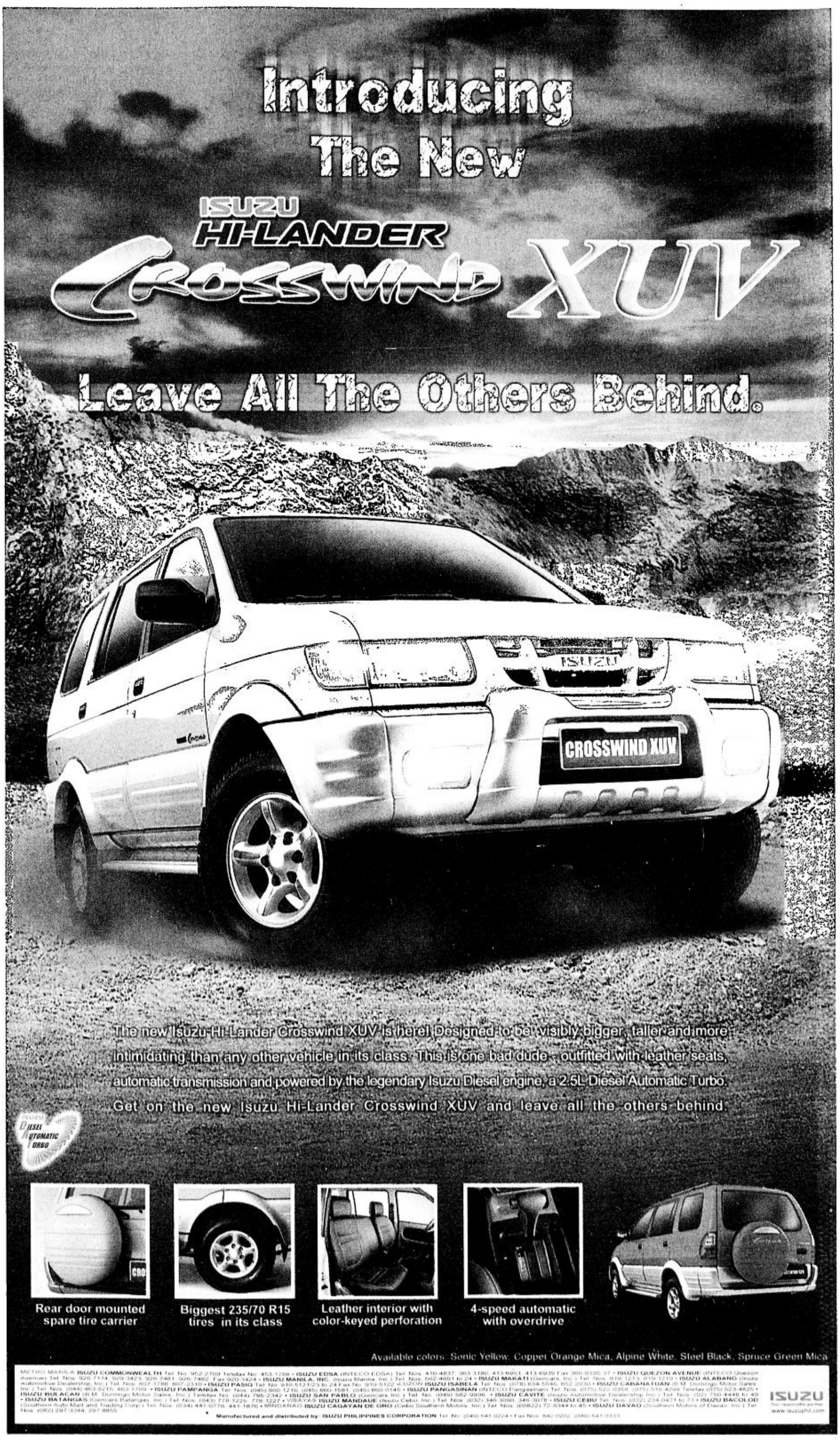
Jointly organized by the DTI through the BDTP and the Gateway East Inc., the fair will be held in cooperation with the Department of Interior and Local Government and the Cooperatives Development Authority.

Meralco's training center

MERALCO's Human Resource Development/ MMLDC, a training and development center in Antipolo City, was recently certified to the 2000 version of the ISO 9001 standard.

The ISO certification is a Total Quality Management (TQM) program that was initiated under its business process management component.

The ISO seal is expected to help MMLDC attain its vision of becoming a world-class training and development center that will set the standards for the utility industry.



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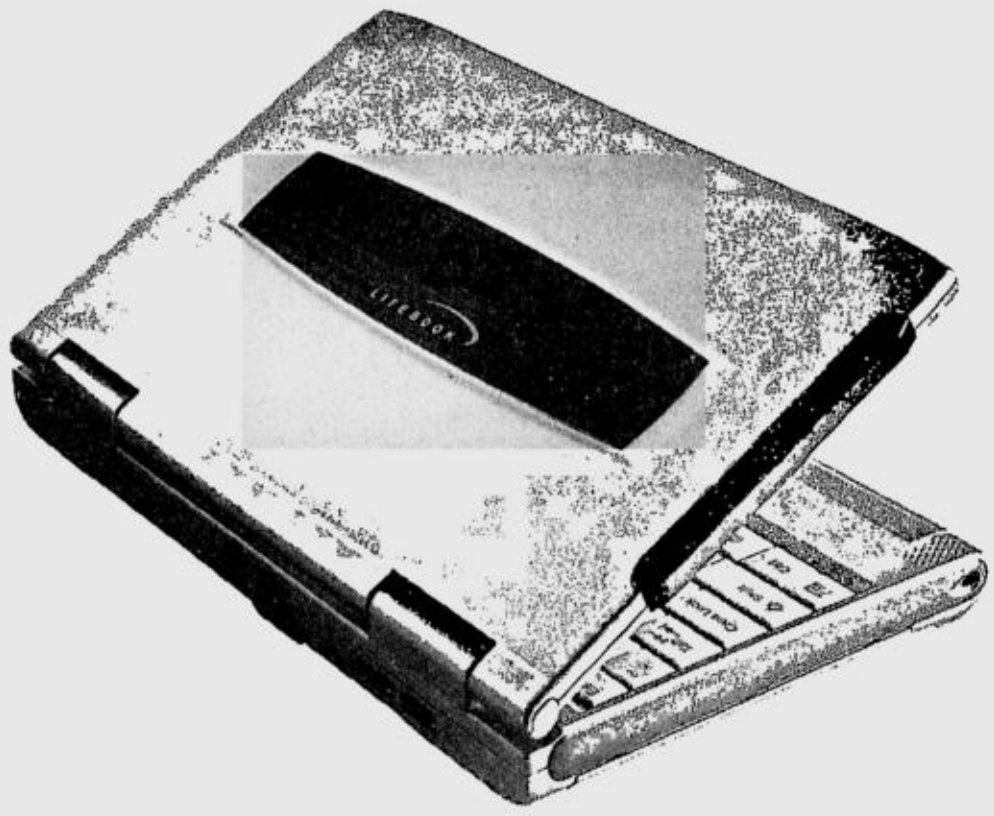

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Metal group urges gov't to fast-track NSC reopening

By Butch D. Enerio
PDI Mindanao Bureau

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—The Metalworking Association of the Philippines (MIAP) has urged the government to fast-track the reopening of the country's largest steel manufacturing to relieve the players of the metal industry from the high cost of imported raw materials.

MIAP, which recently culminated its 15th national convention over here, said the country's metal industry would remain noncompetitive compared with other Asian countries. Becoming globally competitive would be wishful thinking if the source of raw steel continues to be imported, it said.

"We are urging the government for the early reopening and operation of the mills of National Steel Corp. (NSC), so that the metal industry could realize its role in nation building, while unburdening us of the high cost of importation of steel," said Eduardo Chan, MIAP national president.

He said many downstream players of the industry, such as the machine and body building shops, have already closed because of the high cost of raw materials.

"Despite the government's lowering of tariff of imported steel, some players in the industry still could not sustain doing business because of the lack of capital to buy the imported steel," said Jimmy Chan, MIAP's past president.

He said the country imports different kinds of steel from neighboring Asian and European countries to the tune of $6 billion annually just to meet the country's demand for steel, particularly in the infrastructure sector.

"And if we have the NSC reopened, our needs (for) raw materials would come out cheaper and would be less costly for the consumers. The country would also save billions of dollars from steel importation," Chan said.

NSC closed its plant in Iligan City more than two years ago after it declared bankruptcy. Thousands of NSC employees and their dependents were affected. The closure also resulted in the decrease in the city's revenues.

Prospects brighter for seaweed firms

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The long-term prospects of the carrageenan industry appear brighter as new applications for the product are emerging, including possible use as an anti-HIV formulation.

"The carrageenan industry remains a sunshine industry. It still has a lot of untapped potential," said Benson U. Dakay, chief executive officer of both Shemberg Marketing Corp. (SMC) and Shemberg Biotech Corp. (SBC).

The SBC is now developing the carrageenan market for capsules, which will be developed by 2003, Dakay said.

This year, he said, SBC will be serving more on sample orders since it usually takes a longer time for pharmaceutical firms to test the carrageenan capsules.

"But once they approve the carrageenan capsules, you're in and they will stay for a long time," he said.

Tests are ongoing at Drugmaker, a company based in Metro Manila, for the retooling of its equipment to accommodate the use of carrageenan in the manufacture of capsules, SBC chief executive officer Benson U. Dakay said.

In addition, there is an ongoing development of a microbicide using carrageenan as an active ingredient that can be used in preventing sexually transmitted diseases.

According to a medical journal, this microbicide target organisms such as HIV, herpes virus or the human papilloma virus.

Microbicides, which are in the form of foams, gels or creams, are designed to kill disease-causing organisms.

The article on microbicidal gels noted that a microbicide was being developed by the United States-based private organization Population Council.

Called Carraguard, this microbicide is a mixture of two forms of carrageenan, a group of sulfonated polysaccharides isolated from seaweed and long used as thickeners in foods.

Carrageenan was believed capable of immobilizing viruses, the article explained.

The product, however, is not a spermicide, noted the article quoting Robin A. Maguire, program manager for microbicides at the Council's Center for Biomedical Research.

"We did this consciously, as our mission is to help women in the developing world," said Maguire.

The center is planning Phase III efficacy trials with 6,000 women.

Baguio may junk ₱2-B Uniwide deal

THE BAGUIO city council is bent on terminating its 30-year city market development contract with cash-strapped Uniwide Sales and Realty Corp. estimated to be worth close to P2 billion.

Uniwide never undertook the modernization of the city market "because it never had the money to undertake the project, but the previous city government still protected it," said Councilor Braulio Yaranon, a retired judge, who had been leading the opposition to projects such as these.

Yaranon said the city council intended to correct or negotiate better terms from these contracts. He said most of these contracts were badly negotiated and had benefited investors favored by the previous city administration.

Yaranon denied that the council agenda was "anti-business."

"If we can clean up these problems, and negotiate better deals that will benefit the city, not the investors, maybe we can finally provide a more transparent, more regulated environment for business. We can't do business like this. And we can't have investors who can just tell us what to do," he said.

The city had acquired a reputation for "being hard" on business, since a controversial lobby group managed to discourage a Taiwanese consortium from taking over Camp John Hay in 1993, a businessman here said. ***Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

Export sector recovery plan up for GMA approval

FINAL touches of the recovery plan for the battered export sector have been finalized. The plan is due for approval by President Macapagal-Arroyo in April.

"We have accomplished one important thing when we made the export plan. When we found ourselves in deep trouble, we made a roadmap on how we must get out of it. It is not a perfect plan but it has given us a goal to aim at, and a guide on how to reach it," Sergio R. Ortiz-Luis Jr., president of the Philippine Exporters Confederation (Philexport), said during the 15th CEO Forum held recently.

Ortiz-Luis expressed hope that when President Macapagal approved the plan, she would also commit additional funding for export promotion and development to augment the resources of the exporters.

Official budget records showed that capital expenditures for export promotions and development amounted to only P50 million a year in the past five years with no additional budget backing the export plan this year.

The export plan is a joint undertaking of industry players and the export development arms of the DTI, under the auspices of the Export Development Council. That makes it distinct from other government plans that are almost always written by bureaucrats and validated by the supposed beneficiaries, Ortiz-Luis said.

As outlined by Ortiz-Luis during the forum, the three-year export development plan has adopted a two-pronged strategy. First, it has adopted industry clustering as a core development strategy in which interrelated industries including their suppliers and markets get focused development assistance from the government, private business organizations, industry associations and development assistance agencies.

Ten industry clusters were identified. As part of the general export development plan, the 10 industry clusters prepared with the DTI their respective business plans.

Second, the export plan has focused on the opening up of new markets, particularly Asia, Eastern Europe and the Muslim nations while industries establish their market niches in traditional markets like Europe, the United States and Japan.

Ortiz-Luis said that involving key members of the export industry in planning a common survival and recovery plan would help them through the most difficult year for the sector.

"To be candid about it, the blows were real hard. Some of our members had to close shop and wait for the storm to pass. Others resorted to shorter working days. The electronics industry did that. Still others were forced to trim down their work forces," Ortiz-Luis revealed. ***Philexport News and Features***

The rest of the 10 commandments

From page B8

must be on the right side of the trend. I like to buy stocks around P1 to P5 as the documentary stamp is not a major expense.

DO NOT BUY ILLIQUID THIRD LINERS. You may never be able to get out. I bought Ebecom and could not sell it for a year as there were no buyers. In the end, I cut a loss and since then, the stock has halved.

LEARN TECHNICAL ANALYSIS. There are many excellent books imported from the United States or the United Kingdom but they are expensive. You can learn just about anything from the Internet and when I talk about the various indicators technical analysts use, I will direct you to the appropriate website. Personally, I like point and figure charts as they are so easy to update and the patterns are very clear. But I will also discuss candlesticks, KAGI, moving averages and support/resistance levels, the latter being very important.

Next week, I will discuss bull, bear and panda markets, also sector rotation. Enron has really gone into creative accounting. Apparently, they put a flower pot on top of a sewing machine and entered it in the balance sheet as plant and machinery. The employees have reshredded the shredded paper and are now selling it at weddings as confetti.

* * *

I regret that the information given regarding the website was incorrect as there was an error in encoding. The person responsible has been sent to Afghanistan. It should read www@abcapitalonline.com. There are two services. One is a single page on the website which gives a summary which reflects my thoughts on the market. The second is a more comprehensive service which gives buy and sell recommendations, charts of all kinds, support and resistance levels of 50 stocks, and other useful information. It is for the active trader or for large investment portfolios which want to stay in the market and ignore the minor corrections. Different parameters are used in each case. *(For details, e-mail mrbearbull@hotmail.com or fax 810-3797 with my name on top.)*

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John Hay firm . . .

From page B2

• Violation of the prohibition against the five-year holdout period of the equity of Fil-Estate Management Inc. and Penta Capital Investment Corp. when changes were made in the composition of the consortium as of May 2000.

It was likewise "prejudicial" to the interest of the government, the report said, that while CJH reneged on its P721.45 million in accumulated obligations to the government, CJH was generous enough to declare P928 million in dividends to its stockholders from 1998 to 2000.

In this regard, the action plan mapped out by the task force was for the BCDA, through JPDC, to initiate termination of the lease agreement and immediately take over the tourism estate.

"First, any further extension would give CJH time to sell all profitable areas. Second, there would be a decrease in the marketability of Camp John Hay and potential investors will not be enticed to consider the area," the report said.

"Entering into new contracts will be 'poison pills' for new investors," it further warned.

The INQUIRER tried to reach Sobrepeña and Fil-Estate senior vice president Rafael Perez Detagle but both were not available for comment as of press time. Fil-Estate, however, is expected to contest the termination moves and cite BCDA's own shortcomings.

CJH is 35-percent owned by the Sobrepeña family's College Assurance Plan group. Another 35 percent belongs to Fil-Estate Land Inc. while a company of businessman Manuel Zamora holds 30 percent.

The Sobrepeña group won the contract to develop Camp John Hay in October 1996 after another property consortium led by Sen. Manuel Villar, who then headed the country's biggest developer of low-cost housing, forfeited its bid.

Sobrepeña earlier noted that the consortium had invested more than P2 billion in the development of the former military reservation.

As to the unpaid obligations, the Fil-Estate consortium is putting the blame on the BCDA for delays that had cost it four years of potential revenues, such as a 31.8-hectare property shortfall that the government had allegedly concealed when it leased out the Baguio property. This shortfall had been covered through a land-swap deal in May 2000.

CJH is likewise contesting the computation of rent dues claimed by BCDA, estimating its liabilities to the government at only P296 million under a BCDA document allowing rent adjustments from 1998 to 2000 and a system of offsetting the obligations using pieces of property and company shares.

BCDA was also blamed for a two-year delay in issuance of an environmental compliance certificate, a prerequisite for construction work delay in issuance of pertinent regulatory directives for the John Hay Special Economic Zone, which, according to CJH, hampered the importation of vital construction materials and equipment.

Gov't . . .

From page B1

4.19 percent.

From owning about 40 percent in 1995, the government shareholders in PAL had been diluted significantly. In 1995, PR Holdings, a company that was 51 percent owned by Tan, controlled about 67 percent of PAL.

Macalincag said that in the case of DBP, the bank bought shares in PR Holdings for about P10 each. But when PR Holdings was dissolved and the shares were converted into PAL equity, the value of the shares was diluted to P5 each.

"Even if we exercise our put option, we could never recover the value of our original investment," Macalincag said.

During the first six months of operations from March to August 2001, the airline posted a net loss of P178 million.

In 1999, the flag carrier required a fresh $200-million infusion that was put up by the Tan group.

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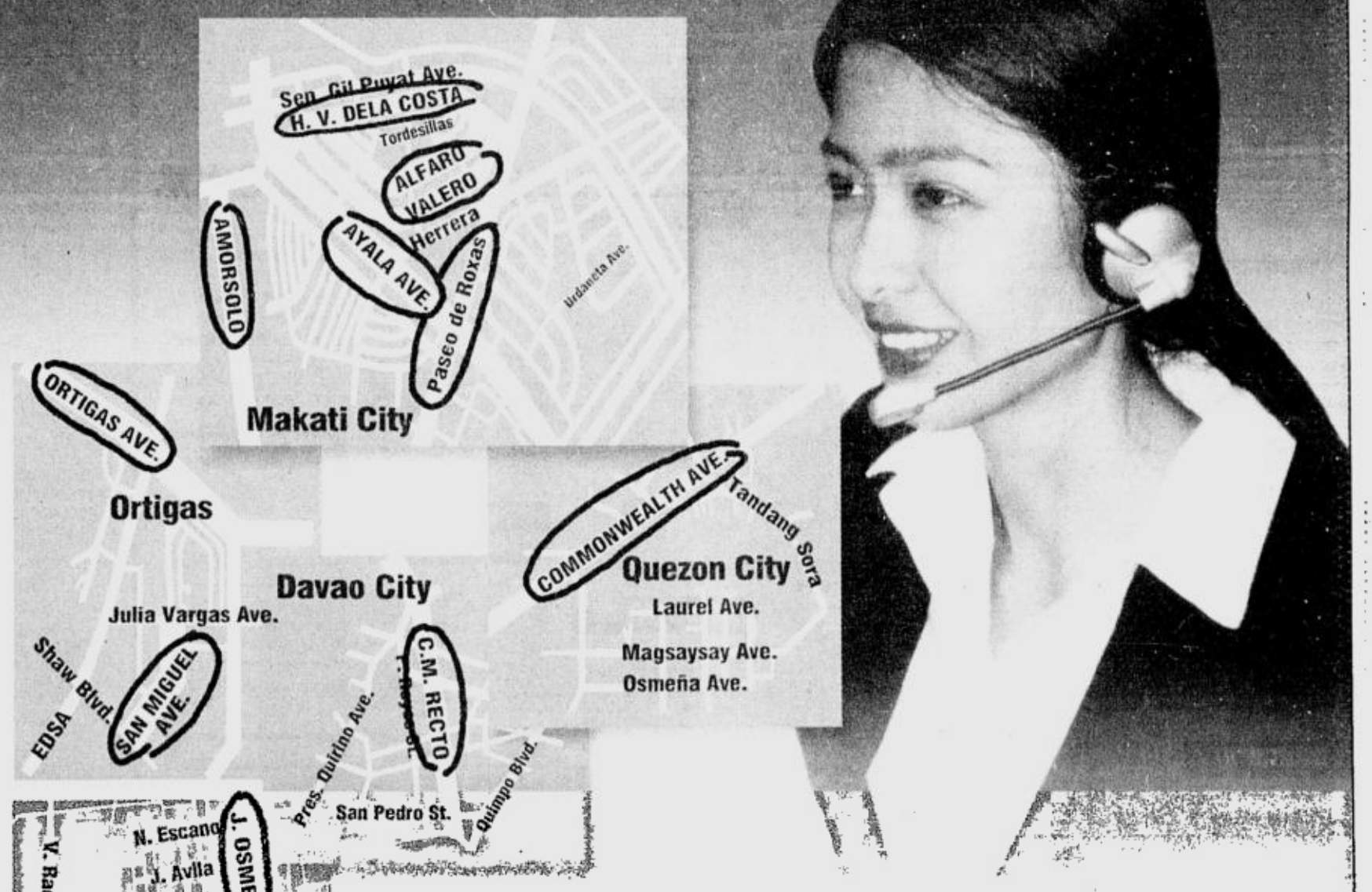

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1 unit	**CAMERA, CANON** digital camera, powershot latest model
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1 unit	**AIRCON, KOPPEL** split type IKE 418N7C 2.0hp

To guarantee the faithful performance by the contractor of his undertaking, he shall post upon the signing of the contract a performance security in favor of the National Police Commission: cash, manager's check, cashier's check, bank draft/guarantee confirmedc by a local bank, surety bond, collable on demand, issued by the Government Service Insurance System or by surety or insurance companies duly accredited by the Office of the Insurance Commissioner, or a combination thereof, in accordance with the following schedule:

a. Cash, manager's check, bank draft- 5% of the total contract price.
b. Bank Guarantee- 10% of the total contract price.
c. Surety Bond- 30% of the total contract price

SCHEDULE OF BIDDING

1. Deadline of submission of pre-qualification requirements (see attached list) March 22, 2002 from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm
2. Deadline of submission of Bids March 29, 2002 from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm
3. Opening of Bids April 4, 2002, 2:00 pm Napolcom Conference Room

The Committee reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any formality therein and to make an award to the bidders whose bids are the most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **Dir. BERNARDO R. CALIBO**
Chairman
Prequalification Bid & Award Committee

NOTE: All envelopes containing the pre-qualification requirements & bids should be duly signed by the bidders on the lip of the sealed portion & shall be submitted directly to Dir. Margarita R. Montemayor, Secretary, PBAC at the Installations' & Logistics Service, 6th floor, Napolcom who shall, in the presence of the bidder, place the bid in the PBAC steel box.

DOCUMENTARY REQUIREMENTS for PREQUALIFICATION

1. Registration Papers
2. Audited Financial Statements (to reflect income & financial conditions) for the preceding three (3) years
3. List of five (5) major clients in Metro Manila
4. Brochure of the equipment/item offered

(PDI--Mar. 11 &'17, 2002)

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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Wanted Accountant w/ work experience computer literate w/experience and bookeeping Tel 633-2474 • 914-1391 Emma / Joy

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★Urgnt! ADMN STAFF START ASAP 9134470 Lk Joyce★

Ofc Staff 9134470 Ms. Abby

OFC STAFF 9134470 KRAFT

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

MALE/FEMALE

SUBSCRIBER DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANT
F/T Excellent writing skills Organized, team player & goal-oriented Send comprehensive resume to Rm 2608 Prestige Tower Emerald Ave., Ortigas Cntr

URGENT! I.T. STAFF
F/T Good comm. skills
HTML/Photoshop a plus
Send comprehensive resume to Rm 2608 Prestige Tower Emerald Ave., Ortigas Cntr

Wanted Pharmacist
Call 861-6292 • 861-6231

WNTD LIC. C.E. & ARCHITECT pls. send resume to U-443 Cityland Pasong Tamo Tower Pio del Pilar Makati T#8170838/ 43/4812

PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

Shih Tzu Grooming Seminar
Contact THESS • 899-91-92

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

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PNOC-Energy Development Corporation

Energy Center, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, M.M.
Telephone 893-1320 ext. 5115 Fax 840-1461

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION/ELIGIBILITY AND BIDDING

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites Contractors classified by and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as IAC Medium-B in Electrical Works or General Building -- Building and Industrial Plants to apply for prequalification/eligibility and if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the project:

SUPPLY, DELIVERY, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF THE COTABATO RURAL ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT Stage 2, Schedule 1 (27 Barangays), under Bid/Project No. EDC 02-041

The work calls for the supply of minor materials, labor, supervision, equipment, tools, consumables, and other services necessary to provide electric power supply to the 27 Barangays situated in the Towns of MAGPET, ANTIPAS, PRES. ROXAS, ARAKAN VALLEY and MATALAM, COTABATO.

The prequalification/eligibility forms may be secured from the Contracts Administration Group (c/o Nas M. Corcuera) starting **MARCH 11, 2002, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Hundred Pesos (PHP100.00).

The prequalification/eligibility documents must be submitted to the Contracts Administration Group **not later than 5:00 p.m. of March 25, 2002.**

Bid documents shall be issued to eligible Contractors starting **April 1, 2002** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (PHP1,000.00).

For purposes of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **April 18, 2002, 10:00 a.m.** at the AJ HOTEL, Kidapawan, North Cotabato. Site inspection to follow thereafter.

Sealed bids in three (3) sets shall be received by the Contracts Administration Group at the above address **not later than 2:00 p.m. of April 30, 2002** then to be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC

(Sgd.) **ESTER R. GUERZON**
Manager, Operations Services Division

(PDI -- March 11, 2002)

For your Classified Ads requirements, call our Classifieds Advertising Hotlines:

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Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Manila

SAN LAZARO COMPOUND
RIZAL AVENUE, STA CRUZ
MANILA, PHILIPPINES
TEL NO. 711-9502, 711-9503
FAX NO. 743-1078

March 8, 2001

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER
No. 5 s. 2001

TO: All Gulf Cooperative Countries (GCC) States Accredited Medical Clinics/Hospitals and Manning Agencies

Subject: Referral Decking System

Due to the globalization of industry and health care, and in order to be globally competitive, Overseas Filipino Workers Clinics/Hospitals in the Philippines must provide high quality medical services to their clients, such as the Overseas Filipino Workers applicants. Health Professionals have an ethical and moral obligation to render the best possible medical services.

In order to ensure the delivery of high quality health services to the OFW applicants and to reiterate the DOH stand on rebates as previously stated in the DOH BLR Circular No. 1-s, 1990 dated June 18, 1990 and in compliance with the GCC States requirement that only GCC accredited medical clinics/hospitals examination results will be honored by their respective embassies, said OFW applicants should be decked or equally distributed in blocks of ten (10), whenever practicable, among the GCC accredited medical clinics/hospitals in the Philippines collectively known as the GCC Approved Medical Centers Association, Inc. (GAMCA).

There shall be an oversight committee composed of representatives from the DOH, DOLE and DFA to be chaired by DOH, to address policy issues and concerns pertaining to the OFW applicants being examined by GAMCA.

Each GAMCA medical clinic/hospital shall provide free and adequate vehicles to transport the OFW applicants for medical examination to their respective assigned medical clinics/hospitals giving top priority to those fasting applicants.

The GAMCA Center, which is the central office for the referral system, shall start its office hours beginning at 6:00 a.m. to avoid overfasting among the applicants and to accommodate those coming from distant provinces.

In the event that an Overseas Filipino Worker will be repatriated due to erroneous medical examination results, GAMCA shall be held liable, and shall pay for the repatriation and other expenses incurred in the processing of his application.

This shall take effect immediately upon approval.

(Sgd.) **MANUEL M. DAYRIT, MD, MSc**
Secretary of Health

(PDI - March 11, 2002)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

NOTICE OF BIDDING

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce that it will be accepting sealed offers for the Sale thru Market Determined Pricing 2,550 MT (51,000 BAGS) more or less Calrose Rice Variety, Grade No. 1, at the indicative price of:

a. Ex-Warehouse Php P20.40/kg or P1,020/bag

on March 15 and 21, 2002 at 10:00 AM at the NFA Penthouse, 101 Matimyas Bldg., E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City.

A pre-bidding conference shall be held on March 13 and 19, 2002 at 10:00 AM at the NFA Penthouse. In the pre-auction, interested bidders shall bring the following:

a. Original and xerox copy of NFA license (retailing, wholesaling).
b. Duly notarized authorization from the owner, partner, chairman or president that he or she is authorized to represent the business entity in the pre-auction, auction proper and all activities thereto.

All interested bidders shall submit a bid bond equivalent to 5% of the total bid price in the form of cash, Cashier's Check or Manager's Check from any reputable banks in Metro Manila.

Interested bidders may secure the terms and conditions starting March 12, 2002 at DMO OCD, 5th floor from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM. For any inquiries, please call Tel. Nos. 712-15-72 and 712-17-08.

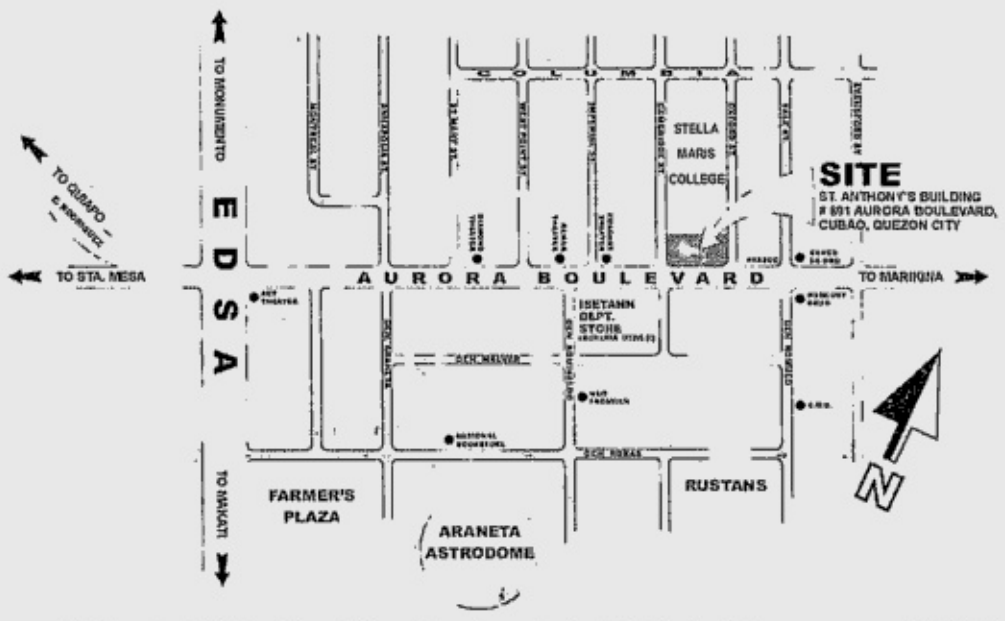
Bidding documents will be available on March 13, 2002 to qualified bidders/offerors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P2,000.00. In case of bidding failure, a pre-bidding/re-bidding shall be conducted at 10:00 AM at NFA Boardroom on March 19, 2002 and 21, 2002, respectively.

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality thereof, and to accept only such bids that are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **ANTHONY R. A. ABAD**
Administrator

(PDI--Mar. 10 & 11, 2002)

INQUIRER CLASSIFIEDS



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PNOC-Energy Development Corporation

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INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION/ELIGIBILITY AND BIDDING

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites Contractors classified by and registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) as IAC Medium Sub-Category A in Electrical Works or General Building -- Building and Industrial Plants to apply for prequalification/eligibility and if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the project:

Supply, Delivery, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of the Samar Rural Electrification Project, Stage IV (12 Barangays) under Bid/Project No. EDC 02-042

The work calls for the supply of minor materials, labor, supervision, equipment, tools, consumables, and other services necessary to provide electric power supply to the 12 Barangays located in the Towns of Bobon, Lavezares, Mondragon, Rosario and Sta. Rita at Samar.

The prequalification/eligibility forms may be secured from the Contracts Administration Group (c/o Raymond Sison) starting **March 11, 2002, 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Hundred Pesos (P100.00).

The prequalification/eligibility documents must be submitted to the Contracts Administration Group **not later than 5:00 p.m. of March 26, 2002.**

Bid documents shall be issued to eligible Contractors starting **April 12, 2002** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00).

For purposes of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **April 19, 2002, 2:30 p.m.** at PNOC-EDC's CAC Conference Rm., Ground Floor, Building V.

Sealed bids in three (3) sets shall be received by the Contracts Administration Group at the above address **not later than 2:00 p.m. of May 16, 2002** and then to be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC

(Sgd.) **ESTER R. GUERZON**
Manager, Operations Services Division

(PDI -- March 11, 2002)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OBITUARIES

ANTONIA NENITA YENKO KASILAG

Widow of **Marcial R. Kasilag, Jr.**

Peacefully joined the Lord on March 9, 2002 at the age of 79.

Her bereaved children **Beth** and **Doming**, **Bing** and **Gil**; grandchildren **Jing**, **Alex**, **Micko**, **Miguel** and **Aqi**; great grandchildren **Yang-Yang**, **Kyla** and **Carlo** and dear relatives, in-laws and friends mourn her passing and pray for her rebirth to eternal life.

Her remains lie in state at the Garden Suite of the Loyola Memorial Chapels, in Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, March 13, 2002 at the Manila South Cemetery, Kalayaan Avenue, Makati City after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

St. Joseph's Missionary Society
(also known as the Mill Hill Missionaries)
announces with gratitude the departure to heaven
of

Most Rev. Bishop Cornelio de Wit

who died in St. Paul's Hospital, Iloilo City
on March 8, 2002 at the age of 79.

He was Ordained a Priest in the Netherlands in 1946.
He arrived in the Philippines in May 1947 and subsequently served as a pastor in several parishes in Iloilo and Antique Provinces.
He was Ordained a Bishop for the newly erected Prelature of San Jose de Antique in 1962.
He was elected Superior General of the Mill Hill Missionaries in 1982, a post which he held until 1988.
He served as Vicar for the Religious of the Archdiocese of Manila from 1989 till 1996.

A Mass of thanksgiving for the repose of Bishop de Wit will be offered in Jaro Cathedral at 9:00 a.m. on March 12, 2002.

The funeral Mass will be celebrated in the Cathedral of San Jose, Antique at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, March 20, 2002. Interment will take place after the Mass inside the Cathedral of San Jose, Antique.

Bishop de Wit's Episcopal motto was: "I have come that they may have life, life in all its fullness." (Jn 10:10)

May the Divine Shepherd now grant him the fullness of life, which he so earnestly sought for others!

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

Our Dearly Beloved

BEATRIZ GABRIEL ASUNCION

Has peacefully joined our Creator on March 09, 2002 at the age of 85.

*Her bereaved daughter **Josefina M. Javinez** & son-in-law **Leo Javinez**; grandchildren **Ana Marie & Bernie, Telly, Vivian & Sami, Boyet & Jo**, and **Joline**; great grandchildren **Suan, Spark, Steele, Sky, Sage, Samiboy, Rain**, and dear relatives and friends request the pious readers to join us in praying for her journey to eternal life.*

Her remains lie in state at Fr. Willmann Suite Holy Trinity Chapel at Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, March 13, 2002, 2:00 p.m. at Manila Memorial Park, Dasmariñas, Cavite.

"Eye has not seen, ear has not heard, nor has it so much as dawned on man what God has prepared for those who love Him."

I Corinthians 2:9

FELIPA C. TINIO

August 13, 1929 - March 7, 2002

Her husband **ANTONIO**; children **MARIO, BIEN, ZALDY, JHIE, GIRLIE, BENG, PINKY, BONG** and **JOJO**; children-in-law **MERCY, NANCY, ZOHAIR, RONI** and **JOJO**; grandchildren **VIENNA RAE, BEEJAY, MIK-MIK, MAE-MAE, MENG, KAMIL, GENE, CJ** and **BEA**; brothers and sisters **CETO, FELISA** (†) and **BINYANG** request the pious readers to say a little prayer for the repose of her soul.

The body lies in state at Capitol Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at Heritage Park, Taguig, on Saturday, 16 March 2002 at 2:00 PM.

People, Events & Products

aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Aries Espinosa, Editor

China makes inroads in RP motorbike sector

CHUN LUNG Fortune Corp. and its Chinese business counterparts have affirmed their support to the Philippine economy as Hong Kong investors are set to introduce into the country's Japanese dominated market some 30 different models of China-made motorcycles starting the first quarter of this year.

During the product launching recently held at its Makati showroom, Rosita Lao, general manager of Chun Lung Fortune Corp., said Sukida motorcycles represent high quality products at competitive prices.

The Sukida motorcyles, she said, will be made available to the market as complete motorcycle lines, from scooters to tricycle models, dirt bikes to big bikes and cruiser models powered by 100 cc to 250 cc engines. Sleek and powerful all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) would also be introduced.

Established since 1987 as the Kaier Motorcycle Industry Co., Guangzhou Panyu Haojian Motorcycle Industry Co. Ltd are the manufacturers of Sukida motorcycles. Haojian is also the manufacturer and supplier of the best-selling Garuda motorcyles in Indonesia which, due to the quality, have landed among the top 10 players in Indonesia in its first 18 months. Garuda motorcycles, to date, are also the first and only China-made motorcycles that have been approved and licensed for import, sale and distribution in Thailand. All Sukida motorcycle units are solidly backed up by after-sales support, spare parts and services.

According to Lao, "In a span of three years, Sukida has developed more than 30 million models, with regular additions and updates every few months. Sukida also has won high remarks in the international certifying agencies, such as the ISO 9002 Quality System Certification released in December 1999, and the Quality Certification for Motorcycle Product Export. Since then, exports have been accepted and approved in Southeast Asia, United States, The Middle East and Africa."

"This will be the first time we will venture in the Philippine motorcycle market. Chun Lung, as well as its Chinese business partners are very confident that amidst the Southeast Asian crisis that has affected even the Philippine market, it is our contribution to be part of the macroeconomic growth and development of the country's motorcycle transport sector," she added.

Chun Lung will be working in close partnership with local dealers to ensure that both dealers and consumers are getting all the best out of Sukida motorcycles.

Dealership and sales for Sukida motorcycle lines are set to commence this first quarter of the year.

UCPB EXEC ELECTED BSMA PRESIDENT

UCPB vice president Jesus M. Belanio was elected president of the Bank Security Management Association (BSMA) for 2002. BSMA is the association of the heads of the security departments of banks. Belanio's election to a fourth term is unprecedented in BSMA. Belanio has 30 years of experience in security management. Shown is Philippine National Police-National Capital Region chief Edgar Aglipay inducting the newly elected officers of BSMA (from left) Belanio; Col. Felipe C. Buena, Jr. of RCBC, vice president; Col. Carlos M. Taganas of International Exchange Bank, secretary; Col. Melencio C. Labalan, Jr. of China Bank, treasurer; Eugene D. Chua of Banco de Oro, director; Conrado J. Dilag of Metro South Cooperative Bank, auditor; lawyer James A. Felipe of Metrobank, director, and Gen. Everlino P. Nartatez of Banco Filipino, director. Not shown is Col. Elmo S. Zamora of 1st e-Bank, director.

MODEL UNITS AT FESTIVAL SUPERMALL

Filinvest Alabang Inc. (FAI) recently opened the model units of Vivant Flats at the third level of Festival Supermall in Alabang. Tastefully designed, with complete appliances and furnishings, Vivant Flat's model units make condominium living an enticing option. A 22-story residential tower within Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang, Vivant Flats offers luxurious condominium living for people who put a premium on value. With an innovative concept called 'Shared Development,' investors can acquire their unit at cost. Present during the ribbon-cutting ceremony were (from left) Muntinlupa City administrator lawyer Henry Reyes, FAI first vice president for planning and design Erlinda Tan, and FAI vice president Michael Gotianun.

My.DLSUD: personalized website for La Sallians

THE INFORMATION Technology Center (ITC) of De La Salle University-Dasmariñas (DLSU-D) will soon launch My.DLSU-D. My.DLSUD is the newest way of accessing individual information through the DLSU-D web pages.

Through My.DLSUD, students may access individual class schedules (My.Sched), examination schedules (My.Exam), and tuition assessment (My.Assess). The portal also includes other helpful features. My.Forum serves as a means through which students may engage in discussions by posting messages about any topic. My.Calendar allows them to create a personalized calendar of activities for the school year.

Other features that will soon be ready are My. Record, which will help students access grades from the previous semester, and My.Mail which will enable students to maintain an individual e-mail account.

Students may access My.DLSUD by logging on to the portal using a designated user name and a chosen password.

BIR QC posts high revenues for 2001

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue (BIR) district office 39 South in Quezon City reported recently P686 million in revenue earnings for 2001, a 20-percent increase from its previous collection in 2002.

BIR officials from the district office said the steady performance in implementing a vigorous collection program resulted in the increase in revenues for the district. In 2000, the revenue office posted revenue earnings amounting to P567.29 million.

RDO 39 South attained the highest revenue increase among the 9 RDOs in the area.

Employees from the revenue office said the RDO's performance is also credited to the effective administration of its head, lawyer Ramon Tadeo Cangco, and his vision for good governance and an effective tax program, which is also in line with the thrusts of BIR Commissioner Rene Bañez.

BIR is among the revenue-generating agencies of the government under the Department of Finance.

CELESTIAL MEDIA SERVICES' NEW HOME

Celestial Media Services Inc., one of the leading cinema advertising agencies in the country today, has moved to a bigger and better office at Unit 21C Burgundy Corporate Tower along Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue in Makati City. Gracing the inauguration of the new headquarters were (from left) Rev. Teofilo Bautista, founder and spiritual director of Bethesda Springs of Hope Healing Ministry; Gigi Rodriguez, president of the Philippine Association of National Advertisers (Pana); Teresita Chan, president of Basic Pharmaceuticals; and Oscar Valenzuela, executive director of AdBoard. Celestial Media's first ladies Rosario Bacani, president, and Faith Abaño (extreme right), vice president, were present to welcome the guests. Celestial Media Services, which prides itself on its personalized service, offers video-to-film transfer, commercial production consultancy, acts as a television block-timer, and engages in other cinema-related activities. For more information, call 844-6004 to 65, or 844-6013, with telefax 844-6011.

EACIT AT 10

FEU-East Asia College of Information Technology marked its 10th year recently with a week-long celebration. The occasion was dubbed "East Asia @ 10: Tech-novation X-cellence in IT Education". The school takes pride in being one of only five IT institutions in NCR—from among more than 100 IT schools—to be given the recognition as Center of Development for Excellence (CODE) in IT education by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED). This is the fruit of the school's 10 years of educational partnership with SM Foundation, IBM Philippines Inc., FEU, and Intelligent Wave Inc. Shown is Leonila Africa, former Eacit president, assisting Renato Paras, chairman of the board of Eacit in cutting the ceremonial ribbon to signal the opening of the festivities and the blessing of the new offices and the exhibit booths of IBM Phils., Intelligent Wave, CIM Technologies, Dream & Vision-Macromedia, LG Electronics and Meridian Telekoms. Looking on are (second row, from left) Cecil Anido, AVP for academic affairs of FEU, Richard Jude S. Limgenco, Eacit president and Lydia Palaypay, VP for academic affairs, FEU.

MASTERCARD'S PRICELESS PASSIONS WINNERS

The top three winners in MasterCard's Priceless Passions Promotion enjoy a moment with executives from MasterCard International and some of its member banks. From left is BPI's Marion Kochet-Chua with MasterCard's Anton Corro, HSBC's Jenny Santos; MasterCard's Gert Batocabe; 3rd prize winner of P200,000 HSBC MasterCard cardholder Peaches de Vera Villareal; grand prize winner of P500,000 OneCard MasterCard cardholder Lermy Concepcion; 2nd prize winner of P300,000 BPI MasterCard cardholder Franklin Sy; MasterCard's Judith Dayrit; OneCard Company's Rey Monasteria, and OneCard Company's Joyce Tankeh.

KEY TO THE HEART OF RP

Domestic air carrier Asian Spirit Airlines receives the key to the province of Marinduque in recognition of its continued support in uplifting the state of tourism and commerce in the island. Asian Spirit is the lone air carrier that flies in and out of Marinduque, the place known as the heart of the Philippines as it is located at the center of the archipelago. Shown during the ceremony is Marinduque Governor Carmencita Reyes giving the key to Asian Spirit president captain Antonio Buendia. Witnessing the event are (from left) Mita Reyes, Paul So, director of Asian Spirit, former Governor Luisito Reyes, Jack Po, EVP of Asian Spirit, Butch Rodriguez, VP for marketing, and Lingling Rodriguez, sales and marketing consultant of Asian Spirit.

BITS Clips

UST High '77 at 25

CLASS 1977 sections 4R1 and 4R2 of the University of Santo Tomas-Education High School shal celebrate its 25th anniversary class reunion on Saturday, March 16. The celebration will start with a Thanksgiving Mass at 9:30 a.m. followed by a photo session at the EHS Building, UST Campus. The main event will be a reunion dinner party at the Skytop of the Hotel-Intercontinental Manila, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, which starts at 5 p.m. until midnight. For further details, call Chona at 922-0436.

PDC forum

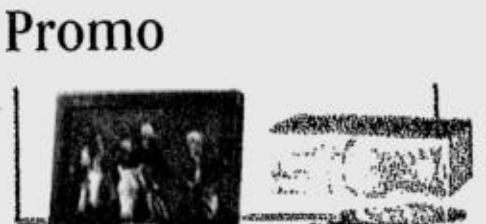
THE PRODUCTIVITY and Development Center invites all CEOs and senior executives to the Top Management Forum on Knowledge Management for Productivity, which will be held on March 12, 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Workshop Room 1, Development Academy of the Philippines, San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City. Tan Kim Leng, an expert from the Asian Productivity Organization, will be the main resource speaker. PDC will also conduct seminars on knowledge management on March 13, and offer an in-company seminar scheduled on March 14. For inquiries, call 631-2137 or 631-0921 to 30 local 171, or e-mail cyrelsg@dap.edu.ph. Look for Cyrel San Gabriel or Corinne Bernaldez.

Platt talks

FORMER US Ambassador to the Philippines Nicholas Platt will give a talk on the US relations with Asia after 9/11 at the Parañaque Room of the Makati Shangrila Hotel. This lunch forum organized by Asia Society Philippines is scheduled for Tuesday, March 12. Platt's involvement with Asia began when he was a student of the Chinese language in Taiwan in the early '60s, and continued with Foreign Service assignments in Hong Kong, Beijing and Tokyo. He was US Ambassador to the Philippines (1987 to 1991) when the Philippine Senate passed Resolution No. 141 effectively calling for the withdrawal of American forces from the bases. For inquiries about the lunch forum, call Ines at 754-4374.

Product FILES

Isuzu extends 'Entertainment on Wheels' Promo



GREAT NEWS. Isuzu Philippines Corp. is extending its "Entertainment on Wheels" Promo. Buyers of Crosswind XTO will have a chance to have the 12-disc CD changer with MPEG and on-dash 5.6" LCD monitor, all for free.

The 12-disc multi-CD player allows the user to play 12 continuous CDs in one loading, adding comfort and convenience to the user. In addition, it is capable of programming the type and sequence of songs. With the MPEG, it can play both CDs and VCDs. The LCD monitor has the same function as that of an ordinary TV.

The special accessories will be given to customers who will purchase any Isuzu Crosswind XTO (A/T or M/T) until March 16. It is reasonably priced at P773,000 and P733,000 for the A/T and M/T, respectively. Visit your authorized Isuzu dealer.

Equitable pursuing plan to go regional

From page B9

four-year contract with the bank.

Rene Buenaventura, Equitable PCI's new president and chief executive officer, said the bank would concentrate this year on rebuilding its strengths. The new president is a distant relative of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura.

Last year was focused on paying out the bank's P30-billion emergency loan from the central bank that was used to meet heavy withdrawals at the height of the juetengate scandal.

"The plan to raise tier-two capital can be pursued this year but it need not be done this year. It is not urgent. We just want to be ready. The discussions with the AMCs regarding the bad loans were put on hold. We will rather wait for the passage of the bill," said the new president.

Buenaventura said the bank was aiming to realize some P500 million in profits this year, from last year's P119 million.

The remittance business, one of the biggest earning operations of Equitable PCI, is expected to grow by 10 to 15 percent this year.

Buenaventura said the bank has yet to decide whether it would dispose of one of its three savings bank or to just sell the branches.

The bank's three subsidiaries are Equitable Savings Bank, Ecology Bank, and Mindanao Development Bank.

SEC readies new set of rules to govern investment houses

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has proposed new omnibus rules and regulations to govern investment houses that will, among others, require these financial institutions to follow a risk-based capital approach.

The Investment Houses Association of the Philippines welcomed the proposed rules, SEC market regulation department director Jose Aquino said.

"I'm all for it because it will mean there will be a measure of the financial soundness of an investment house," an official of a local investment house said in an interview.

The SEC said there was a need to overhaul the rules governing investment houses because the existing rules have become outdated in light of recent changes in the securities regulation landscape due to the enactment of various laws.

In 2000, several investment houses collapsed as a result of panic among investors and also because of the lax supervision by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the SEC.

The proposed rules require investment houses to comply with capital adequacy ratios subject to the rules and regulations issued by the BSP's Monetary Board.

Specifically, investment houses will be required to ensure that their net worth or combined capital accounts should be at least 10 percent of its risk assets, similar to the rule that governs banks. Likewise, the proposed rules will impose a single borrower's limit of 25 percent.

Investment houses must also maintain an unimpaired capital and surplus of at least P300 million or be prohibited from underwriting securities for so long as the deficiency remains. In case of failure to comply with the minimum capital requirement within a given deadline, the SEC may issue a cease and desist order and prohibit the company from declaring cash dividends.

No investment house will be allowed to undertake underwriting commitments for its own account involving an outstanding amount exceeding 10 times its unimpaired capital and surplus.

Moreover, the commission will conduct examinations and investigations to determine if an investment house was complying with the rules.

The draft rules also feature provisions for investment houses to come up with money laundering prevention programs following the promulgation of the Anti-Money Laundering Act last year.

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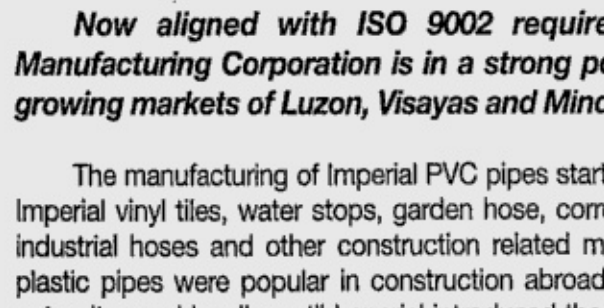
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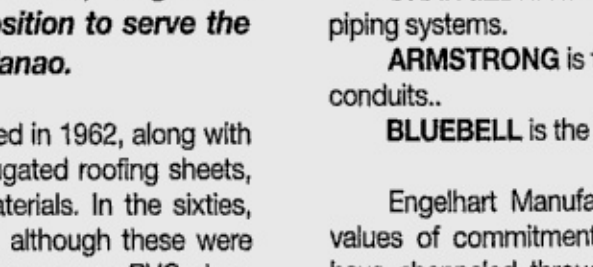
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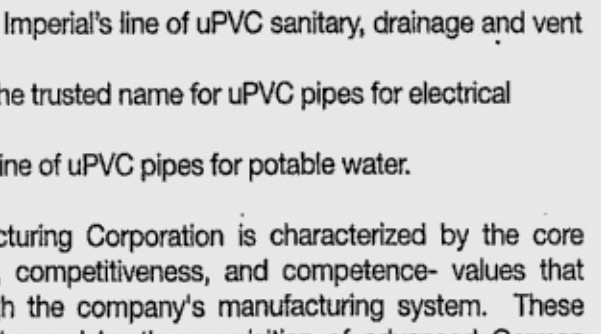

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Gov't seen raising economic targets for 2002

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE INTER-AGENCY Development Budget Coordination Council has agreed to review the government's economic targets in June with a bias toward adjusting the numbers positively by then.

The plan to revisit and consequently revise the targets followed the encouraging economic performance in the first two months of the year plus the signs of an earlier-than-expected recovery of the US economy.

Government sources said the economic team was already preparing to revise the inflation target this year from a range of 5 to 6 percent to a percentage or half-percentage point lower.

The adjustment in the inflation target would spur an upward adjustment in other numbers, including the 4- to 4.5-percent growth in gross domestic product and a flat growth in exports.

The economic numbers were based on the assumption that the US economy would recover starting in the second half of the year and would then push up export earnings, a big contributor to economic growth.

In June last year, the DBCC also reviewed its economic numbers. It led to a downward adjustment of the GDP growth to a range of 3.3 to 3.8 percent from 3.8 to 4.3 percent.

The economic team also discussed, in a meeting last Friday, a new model to adopt in computing for a more accurate target of the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

Based on the model created by economist Emil Antonio for the DBCC, the revenue target of the BIR must be higher by P55.1 billion this year from the agreed number P447.6 billion.

An upward revision of the economic growth targets this year may lead to a higher tax collection requirement from the BIR. Normally, tax collection rises or declines by P5 billion for every percentage point adjustment in GDP growth.

The model of Antonio, a government source clarified, showed that the BIR must collect at least P476.9 billion this year or P29.4 billion higher. Antonio's study did not include 10 taxes that could amount to P25.7 billion, thus the P55.1 billion difference with the BIR's current target.

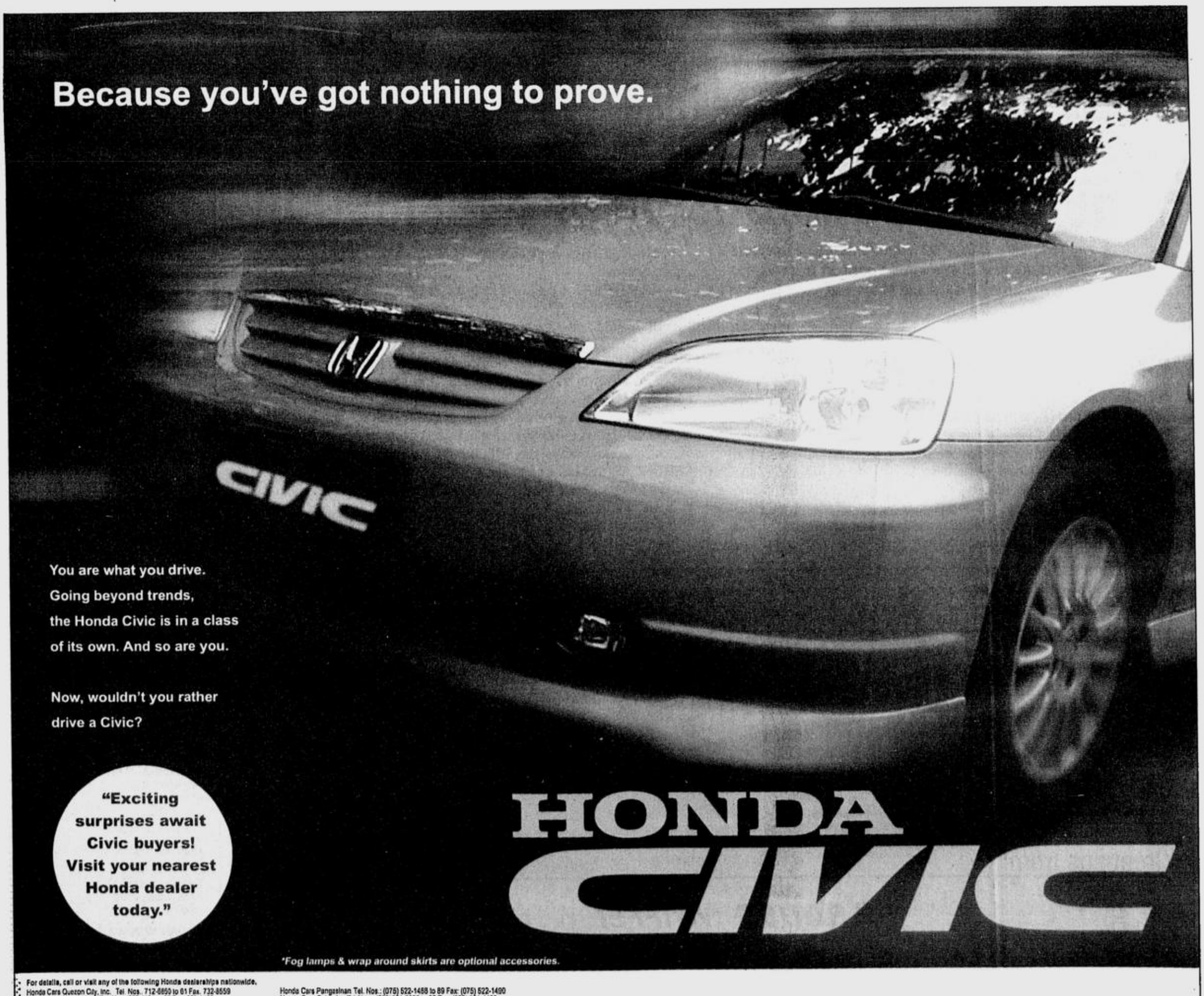
From the collection of the net income tax alone, the BIR must raise P272.2 billion, based on the Antonio model, or P26.2 billion from the current target of P246.1 billion.

From the collection of excise taxes, the BIR must raise P93 billion instead of P70.1 billion. However, for the collection of sales and value-added tax, the BIR was estimated by Antonio to raise only P88.5 billion or P19 billion lower than the current target.

On other domestic taxes, Antonio also noted that the amount should be P800 million lower at P23.1 billion and not P23.9 billion.

The Antonio model would not support a plan of the BIR to reduce its revenue target by P5 billion this year.

Negros Occidental Rep. Herminio Teves had called for a P40-billion increase in the target of the BIR this year following a presentation by the DBCC of the Antonio model before Congress.



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GOOD ECONOMIC SIGNS

'Don't miss the boat,' gov't and business sing

By Clarissa S. Batino

IF LAST year's theme was don't rock the boat, this time the government and the private sector are both singing to the tune of don't miss the boat, if there is such a song.

Even to the risk of missing a beat and going off-tune sometimes, the policymakers and private individuals kept to the new lyrics over and over, like a mantra, in at least three fora recently.

There was the Philippine Business Outlook '02 sponsored mainly by the Knowledge Institute of the Makati Business Club, then the investors briefing sponsored by Chinatrust and KGI Securities, and more recently was the 2nd Asia-Pacific Executive Program of the Asian Institute of Management and the East-West Center.

One can't fault policymakers and the business community for their unbridled optimism.

After all, not since the Ramos administration have we seen Philippine borrowings selling like hotcakes, local stocks fetching attractive prices, and domestic companies enticing foreign investors to local shores.

"We have been overlooked by investors in the past but our story is now very clear. If they want to miss the boat, then its really up to them," said National Treasurer Sergio Edeza.

2001 achievements

The story, especially the portions Edeza was directly responsible for, is a mouthful. It highlights the achievements in 2001 alongside the recent gains that had been a source of much pride for the Macapagal Cabinet, particularly for its economic managers.

The plot, for last year's storyline, focused on the 3.4-percent growth in gross domestic product which was slightly better than the worst-case 3.3 percent target of the government, but certainly a lot higher than the private sector expectations of 2 to 2.5 percent.

Also a pride last year was the budget deficit of P147 billion which came very close to the target of P145 billion.

Borrowings and investments

But the crux of the plot, the excerpts that have made the Philippines the darling of foreign investors, were recent successes in borrowings and foreign direct investments.

In the first two weeks of January, the government launched a $750-million, 15-year bond issue in the global market, primarily in the United States.

The offers reached $2.1 billion and thus, the spreads were considered very favorable to the government but still acceptable to investors.

Then came the approval of the $540-million investment of Japanese brewer Kirin in San Miguel Corp., and a week later, the government closed another $1 billion, seven-year bond issue in the global market although the bids reached more than $3 billion.

In less than three months, the country would have received dollar inflows in the form of debt and equity that naturally pushed its dollar reserves to $16.252 billion as of end-February while the $1 billion bond proceeds had not yet come in.

Exchange rate

The peso is also benefiting largely from these deals as it closed at P50.97 last Friday. Banks were anticipating the huge debt inflow and started selling their holdings.

The inflation rate dropped to a 23-month low of 3.4 percent as of end-February from 3.9 percent the previous month. The benchmark 91-day treasury bill rate, a purview of Edeza, has fallen to a 15-year low of 6.911 percent and is approaching an all-time low of 6.88 percent.

The overnight rate of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas is also at its seven-year low of 7.25 percent for borrowing and 9.5 percent for lending. If BSP Governor Rafael B. Buenaventura would have his way, the policy rates would continue to go down.

"We are off to a good start with the Kirin investment and the opportunistic borrowings of the government," said the BSP governor.

A more circumspect analyst pointed out though that not much has changed since last year when the business community, although more cautious and perhaps a bit less optimistic, was as bullish about the Philippine economy.

But then, growth last year still fell short because of problems that came after the rosy projections.

The analyst who would rather be unnamed pointed out that during the same time last year, the euphoria over the ouster of former President Joseph Estrada had not been clipped.

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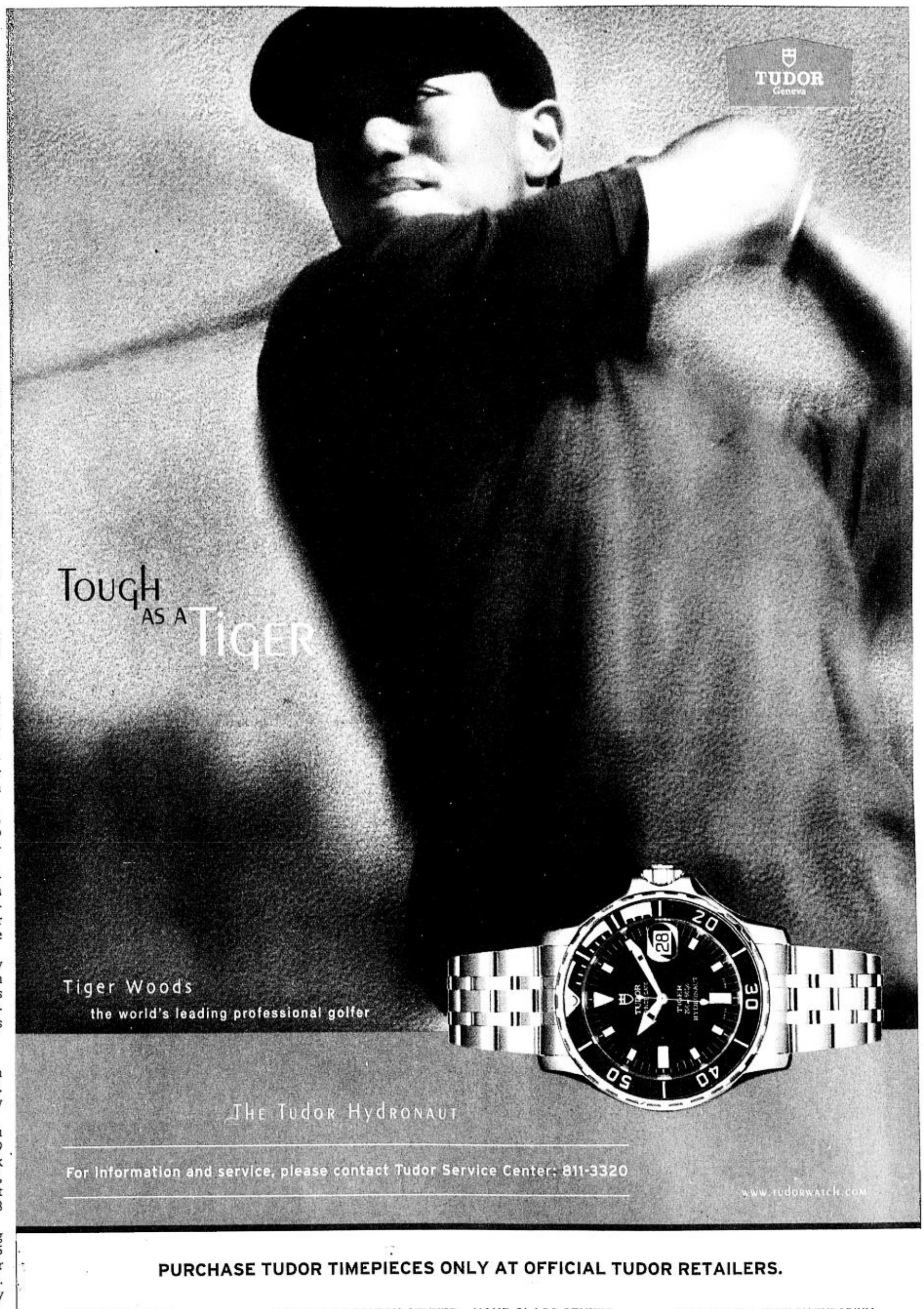

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Are we shooting ourselves in the foot?

MAPPING THE FUTURE

By Franco G. Del Rosario

EVERYBODY understands that the single source of the Philippines economic problems is the lack of confidence. Regrettably, the problem with a lack of confidence in a country is it invariably leads to what is called the "vicious cycle" phenomena.

What does that mean? In this kind of "nervous" environment people become fearful. Fear normally causes people to become very cautious; starting with their cash. Therefore, cash becomes king. People do not want to get caught without cash in an uncertain environment.

Firms cut discretionary spending to the bone. These would be items that do not hamper business operations. There are also those businesses that refrain from borrowing. Being more liquid, banks are eager to lend, though they are super selective in the clients they lend to.

When we put together the whole picture, we see we are in a "vicious cycle." Sometimes it seems like no one wants to initiate anything because they are thinking everyone is feeling the same way.

Unfortunately, their attitude becomes one of bracing themselves for the long haul as they do not see any "light at the end of the tunnel."

Self-fulfilling prophecy

There is agreement that the effect of the shaken confidence on the country is a slowdown in business activity. But many are still skeptical about the positive news reported about the Philippines that should give us reasons to feel better about our future.

The Feb. 5th and 19th issues alone of the Asian Wall Street Journal reported, as follows: one, the headline overnight borrowing rate in a tiered system was at its lowest level in 6-1/2 years at 7.25 percent. Two, inflation has moderated due to stable food prices and is expected to be benign until at least midyear. Three, the Philippines continues to be one of the region's more resilient economies, beating market expectations by posting a 3.4 percent growth in gross domestic product (GDP) for 2001.

In fact, for the 4th quarter GDP grew 3.8 percent, higher than the government's target, spearheaded by robust agricultural production and gains in other sectors. Four, Moody's Investors Service upgraded its outlook on the Philippines to stable from negative, crediting the improvement to the government's success in meeting fiscal targets and a stronger economic outlook.

Sadly, it is bad enough that some ignore the good side of things, and actually dwell on the negative. There are some that are unaware of their infectious effect on the people they come in contact with. They sometimes convert some positive people and they become negative, either immediately or over time.

There are also the negative people that become cynics. Perhaps the worst consequence of negative talk is that it puts a damper on fresh ideas as some confident people may become insecure with the "doom and gloom" soothsayers belittling their ideas.

Perhaps, the worst types are those that even embellish the negative stuff, make jokes of the situation and spread it to others. Some even feel good that others are laughing at their jokes. There must be some other way to entertain ourselves instead of mocking the Philippines. But isn't the joke really on us all? Are we laughing at our own expense? ARE WE SHOOTING OURSELVES IN THE FOOT each time we say or hear jokes about the Philippines? Some call bashing their own country are "Filipino humor."

I am not advocating we all be "super" serious, devoid of a "sense-of-humor." But surely, our wit and humor are not so limited that our only material to be humorous is to ridicule or be negative about "the system."

Remarks like "*Patay, wala kang maaasahan sa gobierno!*" do nothing to boost confidence in our country.

Should we be mindful of this "Filipino humor" in the presence of foreigners, both residents and visitors? It is to be deceived into thinking that foreigners understand "Filipino humor".

In some cases, it actually sends the wrong message to foreigners and worse, they in turn communicate it to their business associates, friends and family in their home countries. Some of those people take these reports out of context and they simply "writeoff" the Philippines and label us as strange.

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RYUICHI ITO

CEO says his work is about bringing out the best of two worlds

By Anne Luisa E. Villarico

LEARNING how to operate a business with a partner means putting 100-percent trust in each other's capabilities.

This is a challenge for Ryuichi Ito, president and CEO of BPI/MS Insurance Corp., a newly formed joint venture between FGU Insurance Corp. and FEB Mitsui Marine Insurance Co.

As the president of the merged non-life insurance company, he wants to make sure that both partners are committed to making the business work.

MANAGEMENT STYLES

This means being open to suggestions from both the owners of the merged firm as well as the staff.

"We (MSI) do not intend to follow only our way of doing things," says Ito, adding that he believes that everybody can share their knowledge through the merger.

Ito came to the country just last October. Prior to his new position, he was the deputy general manager of the Asian division of Mitsui Sumitomo.

BPI has the largest network of branches in the Philippines, something that the newly formed company intends to transform into a nationwide marketing and servicing system. It holds majority of FGU stock.

On the other hand, Mitsui Sumitomo, the second largest non-life insurance company in Japan, owns Mitsui Marine Insurance. It operates 64 branches worldwide for its international operation. Some of its best-known clients include Sony, Toshiba and Toyota.

One of the priorities of the joint venture is agency retention and customer retention. BPI/MS management makes sure that their agents will continue to stay with them through a training facility and regular seminars.

In the FGU side, the agency force is very, very loyal. Top producers have been with them not just for decades but for two or three generations. Ito was surprised to see the high loyalty and tight relationship of BPI agents and brokers to its company. He also finds the Filipinos very friendly with their Japanese partners.

The 50-year-old CEO says that it is his first time to live in the Philippines so he is very much excited about working here because of the joint venture. He had attended several agency gatherings and visited several agents, in preparation for being the president of BPI/MS.

"I believe that my task is to add some valued support in Asia," says Ito. The Japanese CEO joined Mitsui Sumitomo Insurance after graduating from Hitotsubashi University in Japan in 1975.

His 27 years of experience in the company were devoted to overseas operation for Asia, United States and Europe.

Since this is the first time that MSI has come into a merger, Ito wants to establish a well-balanced company, not only in the size but also in profit. BPI/MS Insurance has a paid-up capital of P305 million.

As the new president, Ito says that it is a new challenge for MSI to work with Filipino partners.

Ito also notes that the market of non-life insurance is still developing in the Philippines. He is optimistic that the Philippine market would grow because the country's insurance premium here is lower than other Asian countries.

RP can catch up with technology–and profit from it

By Dennis M. Arroyo

ITEM: there is a Filipino trading website called B2Bpricenow.com. It's a portal where farmers hawk and sell their agricultural products and supplies. Is this a hi-tech fish lost in a backward pond? The portal is popular: more than 700 farmer cooperatives have sold P 2.2 billion worth of goods through the website.

In fact, the site's managers are setting up a similar venture in Thailand.

That's a case of technology blasting a slow sector through warp drive. There is a way for Philippine industry to catch up with—and profit from—the best of world-class technology.

Immense wealth from technology

Economist Edward Denison did a detailed study of American economic growth over the years 1948 to 1981. During this time, GNP rose by 3.2 percent per year.

The combined growth rate for capital and labor was 1.1 percent per year. (Land does not grow.) This leaves 2.1 percent of the growth accounted for by technological change.

That is, only a third of the economic growth of the United States was due to increases in labor and capital. Two-thirds of the growth was due to technological change.

Indeed, knowledge is this era's primary source of wealth. The steep price difference between the latest computers and an old 386 arises from the technological edge, embodied knowledge. Doctorate holders get fat salaries because they offer specialized accumulated knowledge, brainpower, as their service.

Take note that Bill Gates made his billions from applied knowledge, software technology.

Just copy from others

Does the Philippines need to create new technology to get rich? There is no need to reinvent the wheel. Harvard's Alexander Gerschenkron has noted that poorer countries could catch up with the industrialized world because of available technology. History teaches that innovation from imitation is the winning punch.

Before the industrial revolution, the British used to export wool and import textiles. Then entered immigrants from Belgium, whose weaving skill was eventually copied by the British. A textile industry soon emerged.

Later came England's industrial revolution. It spread across Europe because of French businessmen who visited British factories and copied what they saw. Some even smuggled the machines out of the country.

During Japan's Meiji era, the government sent scholars to study in the West. These scientists later returned with their degrees, and applied their knowledge to the industrialization of the land.

The United States itself followed the path of applied science. Before the 1930s, America was not the world leader in pure science (i.e. making discoveries.) Breakthroughs often came from Europe.

However, the Americans were terrific at applying science to commerce. For example, the machines that comprised the car were invented outside the United States. It was Henry Ford who harnessed these inventions into the mass production of the automobile.

How to get the latest technology

Laboratory research costs are tremendous, while it's cheap to copy new technology. Where is it to be found?

Universities and science communities around the world share their findings through scholarly journals—compilations of recent research papers. These publications are at the forefront of technological progress. Even better, they are putting their findings on the Internet.

I suggest the following steps for the Philippines to catch up in technology. This is a means to extract much wealth from the mines of research done abroad.

1. The government ensures that the Philippine academic community has easy and complete access to the said scholarly journals. Libraries are updated, neglected fields are given attention, resource websites are identified.

2. Then the government assembles a corps of local scientists to specialize in the various areas. Assignments are divided; there is at least one researcher for each specialization. For example, one takes on voice recognition technology, another studies global positioning systems, another focuses on ubiquitous computing.

3. Each of these specialists will write papers every semester which summarize the latest findings in their respective fields. They will thoroughly review the technology journals.

That way, the Philippines will have specialists familiar with cutting edge technology in genetics, biochemistry, fiber optics, laser physics, nuclear medicine, metallurgy and the like.

4. These review papers are included in the college and graduate school curriculum. Universities will thus be able to keep abreast with the state of the art.

The program would not need much funding. Some P40 million should do it.

Dynamite knowledge for companies

The private sector is involved with the project. Companies sponsor their chosen specialists, requiring them to write a second paper: What are the innovations with the most commercial potential? How can the technology be adapted here?

The commercial application papers, which go into greater technological detail, are the confidential property of the sponsoring companies. As such, aggressive Filipino corporations can quickly profit from world-class technology.

The country will thus ride on the expensive research done by developed countries. Imagine: The Philippines collects and applies state-of-the-art technology to her industries. Filipino companies become the global leaders in their specializations. *(Comments to darroyo@philonline.com)*

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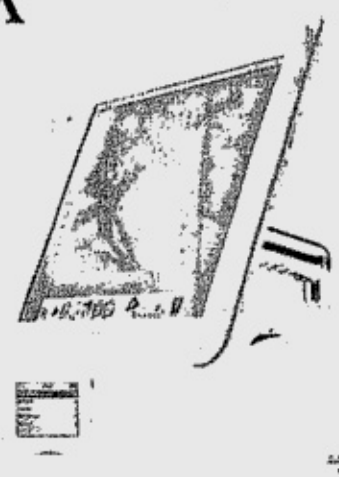

Opening Program

8:00 - 9:00 am	Registration
9:00 - 9:15 am	Welcome Remarks
9:15 - 9:45 am	Keynote Address: Hon. Cong. Teodoro "Teddy Boy" L. Locsin, Jr.
9:45 - 10:15 am	Mac and Myths
10:15 - 11:00 am	Customer Testimony by Mr. David Guerrero *Chairman and Executive Creative Director - BBDO Guerrero Ortega*
11:00 - 11:30 am	Connectivity Challenge
11:30 - 12:45 pm	Lunch/Registration for Seminar Program

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Seminar Program

	Video and Animation	Print & Photography	Digital Lifestyle
12:45 - 1:45 pm	Quicktime Virtual Reality	The Digital Synergy: A Photographer's Experience	Home Movies and DVDs with iMovie and iDVD
1:45 - 2:45 pm	Project M - Softmagic Publishing Solutions for Mac OSX		Music and Images with iTunes and iPhoto
2:45 - 3:45 pm	Final Cut Pro 3	Adobe Print and Web Solutions	Digidesign/Home Studio Music Solution
3:45 - 4:45 pm	3D animation with Maya		Mac Basics
5:15 - 5:30 pm	Closing Remarks and Lucky Draw		

Seminar Program

	Education	Business Solutions A	Business Solutions B
12:45 - 1:45 pm	Richmedia, Internet & Wireless Technology in Today's Classroom	MYOB	OSX Server
1:45 - 2:45 pm	Macintosh in Creative Arts	Quicktime Media Technologies	Domino Everyplace The Power of M-Business
2:45 - 3:45 pm	Mac-PC Connectivity	Discover ArchiCad	Creating Dynamic Website with Filemaker Pro
3:45 - 4:45 pm	Cross Platform: Font and File Management	4 D: Databases and Web Solutions	The New Microsoft: Office Mac v. X
5:15 - 5:30 pm	Closing Remarks and Lucky Draw		

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Are Philippine banks adequately capitalized?

By Elena R. Torrijos

OFFICIAL figures show that the country's commercial banks are still relatively well-capitalized. There are reasons to believe, however, this may not be the case.

The commercial banking system's capital adequacy ratio, an important measure of financial soundness, is reportedly at 16 percent as of October last year, still higher than the 10-percent minimum requirement set by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas based on the old computation.

The BSP has begun to implement a stricter monitoring of banks' capital based on a risk-weight system, but the results have not yet been publicized.

On the whole, analysts believe that the country's top banks look well capitalized, given that demand for loans will likely remain flat to low. This is because banks must set aside capital in proportion to the loans or other risk assets they build up.

For example, if a bank has P1 million in capital, under the 10-percent capital adequacy ratio, it can have up to P10 million in assets. Under the BSP's new risk-based capital system, though, banks would have to set aside 10 percent, 20 percent, 50 percent or even 100 percent capital according to the riskiness of balance sheet assets and off-balance sheet exposures.

"The reason you raise capital is so you can leverage up, so you can expand your loan portfolio, but there's currently no demand so banks have excess funds which they effectively invest in government securities," BSP Paribas research head Ed Bancod noted.

In such a case there would be no incentive to invest in a bank since one could invest in government securities directly.

"The idea is for the bank to generate returns over the cost of equity or capital and the only way to do that is lending to generate bigger spreads," Bancod explained.

However, the analyst said one reason that commercial banks seem to be "over-capitalized" was because no one has been taking the hit in terms of writing off their non-performing loans and other bad assets.

As of the fourth quarter, total NPLs or bad loans of commercial banks amounted to P290 billion while acquired assets reached P144 billion for a total combined amount of P434 billion in non-earning assets. That is almost as much the P464 billion in banks' capital accounts, including loan loss reserves.*

Realistically speaking, banks at this time can still recover as much as 30 percent of their bad assets based on what many large foreign groups have offered. US-based investment bank Lehman Brothers, which has conducted a due diligence of several banks, has offered to buy bank's bad assets for 30 centavos for every peso of bad assets. Many foreign investment funds are also expected to make similar proposals.

Unless creative accounting is resorted to, assuming even that all commercial banks sell their bad assets at 50 centavos per peso, they will have to write off 50 percent or P217 billion in bad assets, cutting their P464 billion in capital to P247 billion.

Assuming that the average capital to risk assets weighting of banks is 10 percent, then only 8.2 percent of the industry's P3 trillion in assets is actually backed up by the P247 billion in net capital.

"Reserves (for probable losses) may be insufficient to cover loss when you sell the assets. So, if banks ultimately decide to stop fooling around and face up to the problems, then you might end up in a situation where capital isn't as sufficient as it currently seems," Bancod said.

One banker also noted that even if banks do not sell their assets, if they did honest-to-goodness mark-to-market valuation of their assets, then they would likely have to book losses because many properties have declined in value and have yet to recover from previous levels.

The BSP's 10-percent capital adequacy ratio may seem stricter than the 8-percent requirement of the Bank for International Settlements, a kind of central bank for central banks. The international monetary organization, however, incorporates both risk from credit and market fluctuations, so in a sense it is more stringent.

Moreover, banks' capital may seem adequate only if the capital is taken as a percentage of balance sheet assets. The BSP now takes off-book exposures into account when computing capital adequacy ratio but how much these off-book exposures banks have is not disclosed to the public.

In fact, the BSP does not require individual banks to disclose their capital adequacy ratios in their published statements of condition.

Again, for example, a bank that has P1 million in capital and a portfolio of P10 million could still be compliant with the 10-percent capital adequacy ratio. However, it may not actually be meeting the capital adequacy requirement if it had P1 million in off-book exposures, say through informal buy back arrangements.

ARE / C5

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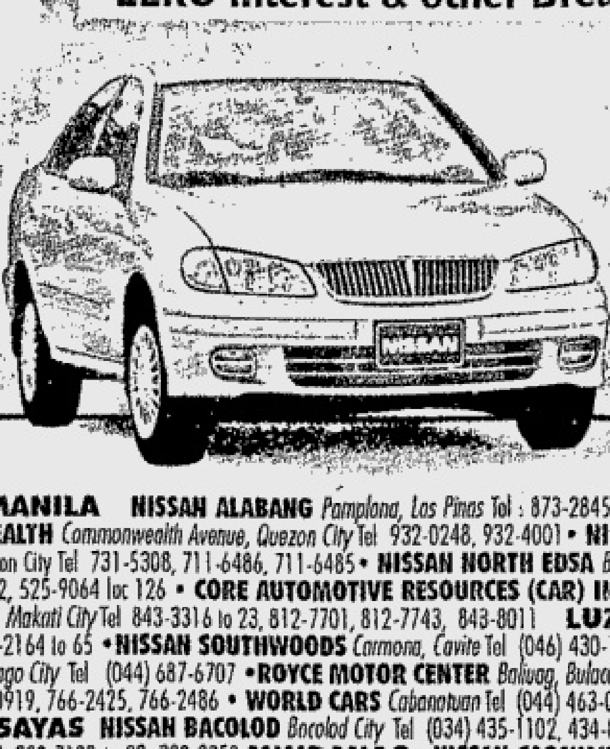

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New kid at helm of giant San Miguel

From page C8

forecasts, the implementation, they will remain. It's the same (management) team," Ang said.

He adds that Eizmendi would continue to have a hand in the company's operations as consultant to the office of the chair.

More popularly known as the right hand man of SMC chair Cojuangco, Ang, who will also stay on as vice chair, has played a key role in the strategic thrusts of the food and beverage giant since Cojuangco made his comeback in mid-1998.

It is the street-smart Ang who has been on top of the aggressive acquisition program of SMC, wheeling and dealing for better prices.

A person who has been on the opposite side of Ang on the negotiating table described the SMC executive as a "tough bargainer" with "very good instincts."

Overall, the market has applauded the moves initiated by Cojuangco and Ang that include the multibillion peso purchases of Australian premium beermaker J. Boag & Son, Coca-Cola Bottlers Phils., Sugarland Beverage Corp., Pure Foods Corp. and, most recently, Cosmos Bottling Corp.

Though his new post would thrust the normally low-profile executive to the limelight, Ang seems bent on keeping his non-business side private.

He refuses to provide the press with a copy of his resumé or talk about his work experience prior to SMC.

In fact, he has regularly protested having his photo included in SMC's annual reports, which is why the report this year would have no photos of the board directors.

In a phone interview Wednesday, just before he stepped on a plane for Hong Kong where he was to attend a meeting regarding SMC's China operations, Ang said he did not want to seem *"mayabang,"* a label that seems to stick to him like glue.

Like a natural-born salesman, he quickly yet affably argues against any criticism of San Miguel's plan of action. His manner, however, leads some to suspect he is prone to exaggeration.

Recently, he told some reporters he was interested, in a personal capacity, in buying the defunct regional publication, Asiaweek. *"Maganda iyan, maganda iyan,"* he said.

One SMC employee said that Ang might be perceived as *"mayabang"* because he is misunderstood. The employee pointed out that being aggressive and ambitious, Ang "has made things happen here (SMC)."

"He thinks big," the employee added.

In a lunch with INQUIRER reporters last year, Ang revealed some details about himself.

Part of a large brood, Ang's parents managed a hardware store in Manila. He himself loved to tinker with gadgets and machines. He became an expert mechanic and at a very young age made his fortune importing heavy equipment, fixing them up, then reselling them.

Very fond of cars—he has 100 including the latest models from the United States, Europe and Japan. He was expelled from a university at 19 over the Mercedes Benz he drove to school.

According to the SMC executive, he got into a fight with the son of a school official who was jealous that Ang was attracting so many "chicks" with the impressive car.

Regarding Cojuangco, Ang said he got to know the "Boss" through one of Cojuangco's sons, who was a friend. Ang had also worked in Cojuangco's cement firm, Northern Cement, as a manager.

Ang does not collect his SMC salary and instead donates it to charity but this does not mean that he would not work hard for the company, he added.

ANG

Are . . .

From page C4

Bancod said that if banks do decide to take the hit from bad assets they would have the choice of doing one-time write-off or charging the losses on future operating earnings.

"More likely the latter, they're going to wait and this will cap future earnings growth and so their share price is not going to improve," he pointed out.

Preparing to sell bad assets at a discount may be one major reason many banks are considering raising their capital. No bank has actually said this, although some banks are being prodded by the BSP to increase their capital in order to meet the minimum capital requirement.

Alfredo Javellana, executive vice president of Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co., which recently raised $100 million in tier 2 capital, said the move was designed "to further our capital base, our capital adequacy ratio and to prepare for possible loan expansion this year."

He said that even before the tier 2 capital issue, Metrobank was in compliance with the 10-percent minimum capital adequacy ratio, although one analyst asserted the bank's CAR had been just slightly below the required ratio.

Yet, like Metrobank, even though loan demand is not seen to improve significantly this year, several other of the country's largest banks plan to raise billions in tier 2 capital because existing shareholders do not have the appetite to put in more funds at present.

Those banks mulling capital increases include Allied Bank Corp., Equitable PCI Bank, Land Bank of the Philippines, Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and United Coconut Planters Bank.

The CAR of these banks based on BSP's complicated formula is not disclosed, but one can use the straightforward formula given earlier to get an indication of their respective capital adequacy ratio. Simply add up a bank's total NPLs and real property owned or acquired and subtract an estimate of how much of these bad assets can be recovered. The resulting figure is then deducted from total capital accounts plus loan loss reserves. The net capital over balance sheet assets would be a good gauge of whether the bank has an adequate buffer of capital.

Even though the CAR of banks is not known, the problems of some banks are no secret to the industry.

UCPB, along with the Philippine National Bank, needs to raise capital in order to comply with the BSP's capital adequacy ratio requirement. In the fourth quarter alone, these two universal banks saw their capital bases eroded by roughly P1 billion compared with the levels the previous quarter.

Based on published statements of condition, UCPB's capital base has plunged 50 percent or P6 billion to P5.78 billion by the end of last year from P11.75 billion a year and a quarter ago.

Meanwhile, PNB has seen 45 percent of its capital accounts or over P10 billion wiped out, leaving total capital as of the fourth quarter at P12.87 billion from P23.24 billion two years before.

In an interview, a senior executive of UCPB admitted that the bank's capital to risk assets ratio was now less than 10 percent because of losses and the bank's decision to recognize approximately P3 billion in loan loss provisions for 2000.

The executive said that the bank has prepared a plan to increase its capital by P3 billion to P6 billion through a combination of fresh capital infusion or so-called tier 1 capital and through long-term debt or tier 2 capital.

However, the capital increase, which would be done in tranches depending on the appetite of investors, hinges on the resolution of the pending case with the Supreme Court on whether shareholders of record or government has the right to vote the shares of the bank. The capital issues could not be undertaken without the resolution of the SC case because stockholders' approval would be required.

BSP Deputy Governor Alberto Reyes expressed confidence that the government or San Miguel Corp. chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco would prop up the bank. Earlier, presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said that the government was thinking of infusing capital into the bleeding bank, which administers a fund that holds a 27-percent stake in the food and beverage giant.

The government is also close to signing an agreement to convert into equity P7.8 billion of P23.9 billion in outstandnig loans to PNB. But many analysts have expressed skepticism that the bank's rehabilitation would be sufficient enough to stop PNB from bleeding.

*(*This was computed by applying the 45-percent industry reserve cover average to total nonperforming loans.)*

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'Don't miss the boat,' gov't and business sing

From page C1

A year ago, the peso was trading below P50 to a dollar, one credit rating agency had revised its negative outlook to stable, and investment banks were each dressing up their forecast for a shot at underwriting the government's huge borrowing.

But then, all the initial gains of the Macapagal administration during the same time last year were immediately offset by the bloody May 1 uprising of the pro-Estrada supporters and again by the Sept. 11 tragedy in the United States.

Hubert Neiss, former International Monetary Fund official and now chair of Deutsche Bank's Asia operations, said that while an earlier-than-expected growth in the United States could lift Philippine exports from a 15-percent contraction last year, some risks in the domestic and global political landscape remain.

"This will be a year of heightened uncertainties and risk on the political side . . . even if the cyclical economic forces are moving toward expansion. The global recovery where the performance of the local economy was hinged on could still be derailed by adverse political events that are unpredictable," said Neiss.

Already, a known Filipino economist and a banker had projected GDP growth numbers that are lower than the 4 to 4.5 percent target of the government this year.

Economist Cayetano Paderanga Jr. said the country was expected to post a GDP growth of 3.4 to 4 percent, while investment bank JP Morgan believes the growth would be around 3.6 percent.

Paderanga's forecast was based on an exchange rate average of P51 to P52 to a dollar, an inflation rate of 4.5 to 5.5 percent and a 91-day treasury bill rate average of 8.7 to 9.5 percent.

"I think we could achieve a better growth this year provided that there would be no extraneous events like last year," said Paderanga, who was recently appointed director of United Coconut Planters Bank.

Roberto Panlilio, managing director and senior country officer of JP Morgan in Manila, said he believes that recovery is just around the corner. He noted that a strong US rebound would increase the demand for local exports, particularly the high-technology items.

This development, said Panlilio, "brings music to his ears."

The euphoria of the Macapagal administration, however, may not be shared by millions of Filipinos who continue to wallow in poverty. For most, this is a time to follow the advice of a foreign pop group that popularized a late '80s song.

"The future's so bright, I gotta wear shades," says the song that many Filipinos continue to dance to during times like these when everything seems to be going right, yet the Murphy's Law feeling that things will still go wrong continues to sink in.

ENRIQUE Aboitiz

JAIME Augusto Zobel de Ayala (left) meets with fellow business leaders.

PHOTOS BY BETOY JOHNSON

MAKATI Business Club's Guillermo Luz answers a question.

LUIS Lorenzo makes a point during the open forum.

Are we shooting ourselves in the foot?

From page C2

We must not forget the theory of the self-fulfilling prophecy. If enough people perceive something to be true, it becomes reality for these people. It was not too long ago we saw that unscrupulous text messages could accelerate a "bank run."

This is an absolute disservice to the country. Words can be very powerful and dangerous. Why not just speak "life"? The devotional bible says "words are dynamite; they can destroy people. They should be carefully weighed before they are spoken." The book of Proverbs has some strong messages on words, as follows:

"The tongue has the power of life and death," Proverbs 18:21 says, "and those who love it will eat its fruit." Proverbs 12:14 says, "From the fruit of his lips a man is filled with good things." Proverbs 11:9-13 says, "With his mouth the godless destroys his neighbor, but through knowledge the righteous escape. A man who lacks judgment derides his neighbor, but a man of understanding holds his tongue. A gossip betrays confidence but a trustworthy man keeps a secret. For lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisers make victory sure."

So, what can we do?

For a start, why don't we reassess what it is we stand from among the things we say and do, and uphold them in our business and social circles? Let us ask ourselves if we really want to cause more fear and become a part of this cynical web of negativity?

Second, how about realizing that each one of us can make a difference individually? Why don't we give hope to those that have "written-off" the next one or two years? Are we working around the liabilities and hurdles surrounding us and pressing forward? Can we afford to sit idly by, particularly in this global economy and discover belatedly that our foreign competitors have "eaten up our lunch?"

Third, how about becoming relentless in finding, sharing and celebrating the positive angle of any news about the Philippines? Why not clip and fax good news to as many people? Why not surf the net and e-mail to others encouraging articles about the Philippines.

Why not write letters of appreciation to anyone especially in government that you have evidence of doing good work for the country? The operative word here is "relentless." Let us demonstrate our consistency in being positive and let it not be dependent on our mood. In time, it will become second nature to us. Likewise, ask others to share with you positive news. Remember being positive is contagious! Confidence breeds confidence!

Fourth, why not change the subject anytime a "socio-economic-political expert wannabe" wants to dwell on anything negative about the Philippines? Otherwise, why not simply excuse ourselves from the conversation? Fifth, why don't we have some fun and ask people around us to fine us 10 pesos every time they catch us with negative talk about the Philippines?

Lastly, why not be equally relentless in praying for the leaders and people of this country? Why don't we pray that there be an outpouring of wisdom, guidance and direction on this country? Would this not be the most powerful thing we can ever do? *(This article reflects the personal views of the author who is a member of the Management Association of the Philippines and chair of Sharexchange Brokers Inc. The MAP Secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec @globenet.com.ph.)*

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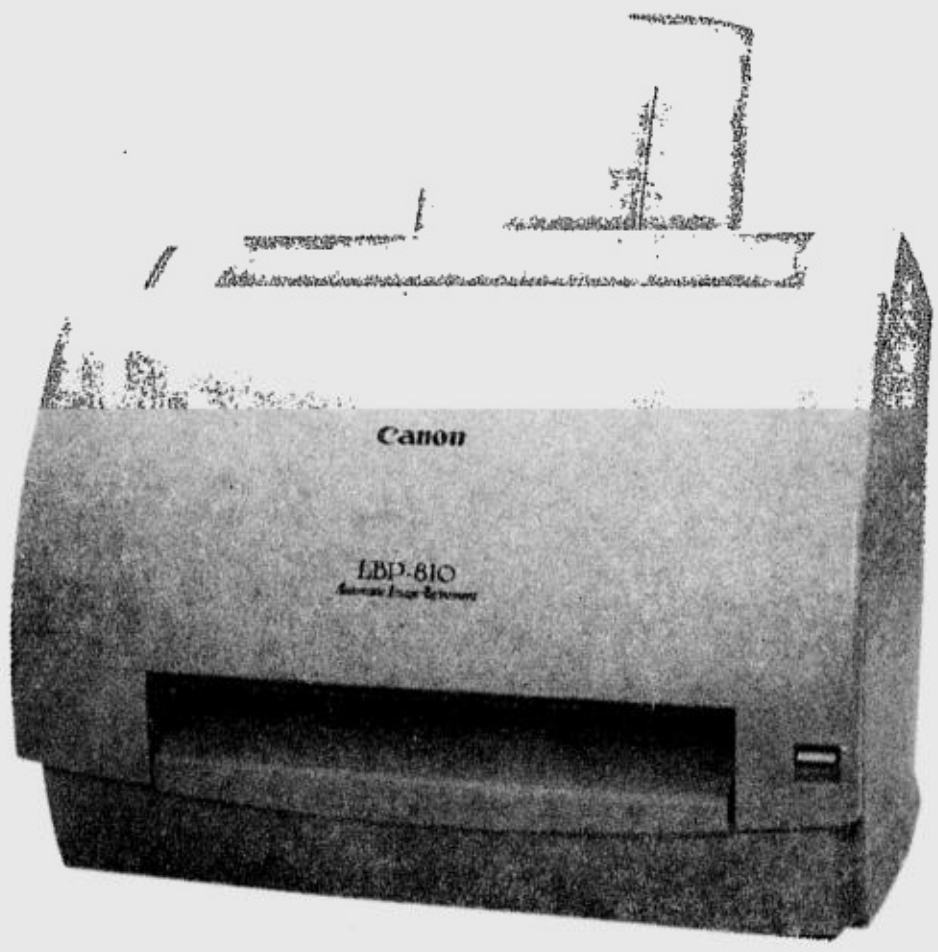

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MOVEMENTS

New GM at Robinsons Properties

DANILO E. Ignacio was recently appointed general manager of Robinsons Land Corp.-high rise buildings division and managing director of Robinsons Properties Marketing and Management Corp.

Prior to joining to RLC, Ignacio was president of Philam Properties Corp., where he was responsible for all the real estate properties, and served as director in several property companies.

He was also responsible for several successful projects, among them the Philamlife Tower, the Tower Club and six other buildings.

Prior to his start in Philam, Ignacio was a vice president in Citibank where he worked for 20 years and was responsible for the successful Citibank Tower project in Makati City.

STI has two new VPs

THE STI Education Services Group recently appointed Sandra Jean Z. Seno-Alday and Cesar T. Herrera Jr. to the position of vice president.

Seno-Alday is the new head of STI's planning and development division. Before joining STI as AVP for human resources, she set up and is currently the managing consultant of Performance Edge Management Solutions, a management consulting company specializing in strategic HRM targeted at the SME market.

Seno-Alday holds an MBA in International Business from the European School of Management in Paris and a postgraduate diploma in Training and Human Resource Management from the University of Leicester in the UK.

Herrera headed the corporate planning division of STI prior to his appointment as vice president for the network service division.

He started his career as an engineer at the Department of Interior and Local Government. He later worked in the corporate planning and business development units of Atlantic Gulf and Pacific and two of the country's biggest sugar milling firms. He then went on to become regional manager of Burger Machine Holding Corp.

A civil engineer by education, Herrera earned his Masters in Business Management from the Asian Institute of Management in 1993.

Citibank appoints new treasurer

Citibank, N.A. recently announced the appointment of Nini Escuadro as treasurer for its Global Consumer Banking (GCB) operations.

In her new post, Escuadro also becomes a member of the Philippine ConsumerBank Senior Management Team. She joined Citibank in February 1997 and headed the funds management division of GCB treasury. Since then, she has deftly managed a balance sheet whose size has grown by over 300 percent.

She earlier worked in CityTrust Banking Corp. (a Citibank affiliate) as management associate in July 1992. This stint was followed by assignments in both community banking and treasury where she also headed the funds management division.

Escuadro completed her Business Administration degree from the University of the Philippines, finishing cum laude and her MBA from the Asian Institute of Management in 1992.

New ACNielsen head

HONG KONG—ACNielsen today announced the appointment of S.K. Fung to the position of managing director, ACNielsen North Asia.

Fung will be based in Hong Kong and assume leadership of the ACNielsen Marketing Information Group businesses in Greater China, Taiwan and Korea. Fung has also been appointed to the Asia-Pacific executive committee and will report to Frank Martell, president, ACNielsen Asia-Pacific.

"Fung is a highly regarded senior executive with over 20 years of experience in the packaged goods and media industries. He is an excellent addition to our senior leadership team in Asia-Pacific and will, I am certain, make an outstanding contribution to our businesses in North Asia," said Martell.

Most recently, Fung held the position of CEO of Media Genesis, and prior to that was president of NBC Asia. Before joining NBC, he ran the international operations of Television Broadcasts Ltd., Hong Kong, and was vice president, Far East, for the consumer products division of American Home Products based in New York.

New MORES board member

EDUARDO "Ned" Roberto, an SWS fellow and board member, has been elected to the 2002 board of directors of the Marketing and Opinion Research Society of the Philippines (MORES), the country's organization of research professionals and research agencies. Roberto, a professor at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM), will chair the MORES committee for research and development.

Other newly elected members of the MORES board of directors are Evelyn Generoso (president), Yolanda Ibarte (VP-membership), Bienvenido Niles Jr. (VP-housing and programs); Daisy dela Torre (board secretary), Raul "RJ" Esteban (treasurer), Alden Castañeda (PR officer), Darrah Estrada (academe committee chair), Marie Lee (education committee chair); Ma. Angela Ong (ethics committee chair) and Carole Ann Sarthou (ex-officio and AdBoard representative).

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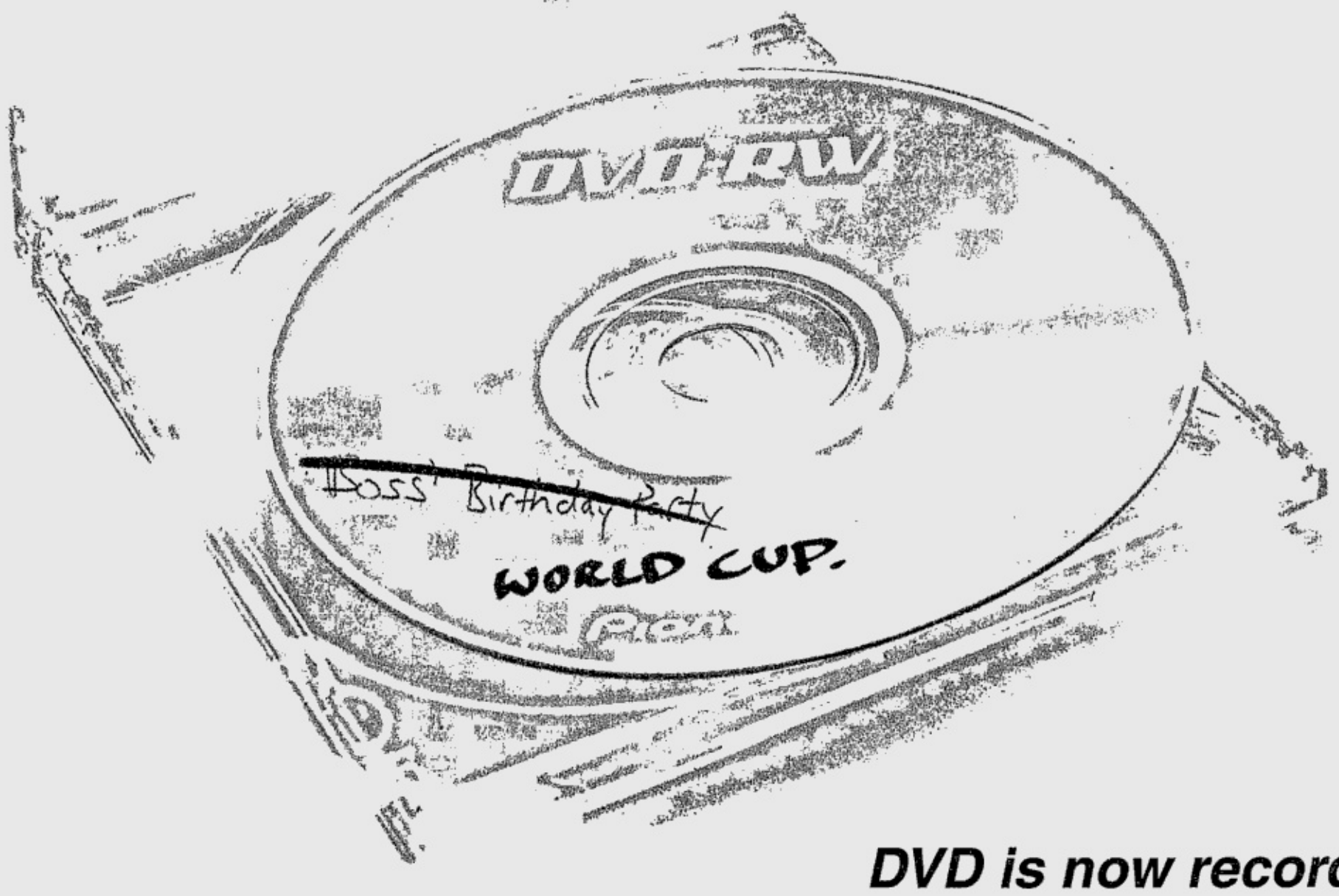

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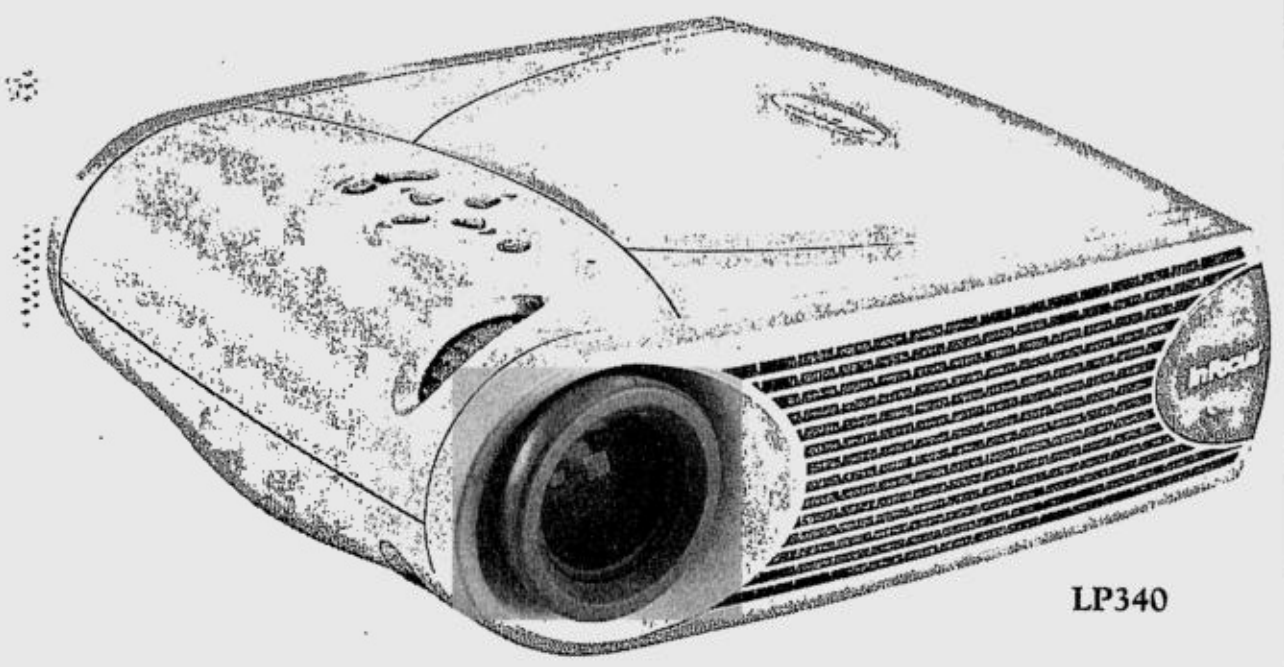

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BUSINESS*Monday*

New kid at helm of giant San Miguel

By Elena R. Torrijos

HIS friends from the old neighborhood knew him to be something of a genius when it came to fixing cars. Cars have always been his passion, and the story goes that it was through cars that he met and became friends with Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr.

Many may think that his knowledge about cars is not enough of a credential to become president and chief operating officer of San Miguel Corp., but he does have a couple of other attributes—being savvy in negotiations and being street smart. Loyalty to "The Boss" Cojuangco should also not be discounted.

Ramon Ang became the new COO of San Miguel last week after his predecessor, the popular Francisco C. Eizmendi, retired after 45 years in the company, and Ang says there will be no major changes in the profitable company with him at the helm.

"The focus and

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LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso ◉ Subsection Editor Lito B. Zulueta

Arts & Design

ONE of the Spanish thrones paraded on the streets for Holy Week

PENITENTS take part in the Holy Week celebration full of symbolism, continuing the tradition that started in the 16th century.

In Spain, Holy Week is a passion feast

Text and photos by Leah Salterio

Wonder where Filipinos got their searing Lenten rituals?

THERE is perhaps no other celebration of Holy Week in the world more colorful than Spain's. While other countries observe the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ on the cross in a more solemn way, Spain does it in a more festive manner.

In April last year, this writer did a five-city tour of Spain upon the invitation of the National Tourist Office of Spain based in Singapore. Journalists from Asia, Europe, the United States, Latin America and Canada gathered in the Andalusian town of Malaga, the first stop of the tour, for its world-renowned Holy Week celebration.

Dynamic stage

The quiet coastal town of Malaga, the second largest city in Andalusia after Seville, transforms into a dynamic stage for the processions during Holy Week. The streets become the divine stage, where devotees carry out a liturgical act and a religious celebration.

Residents of Malaga—from 6 to 60—dress up as if they're attending a Spanish *tertulia*. The women come in their best attire, and even the children don the traditional robes to participate in the celebration.

Twenty-four thrones are paraded on the streets every year, carried by the horquilleros and escorted by rhythmical penitents.

The handsome *horquilleros* even make their donation to the

IN SPAIN/ p.D2

HORQUILLEROS garbed in the color of Lent.

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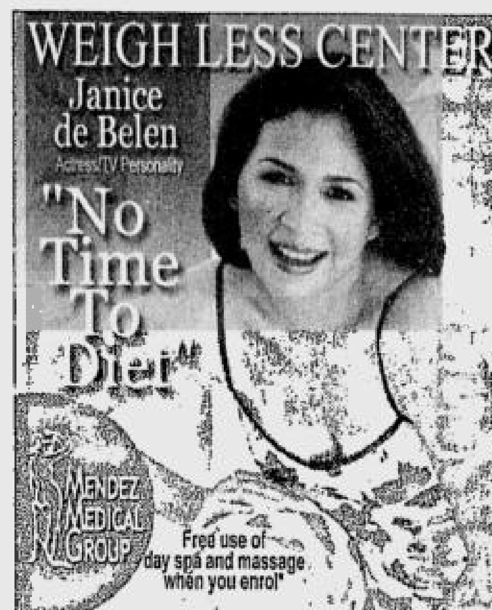

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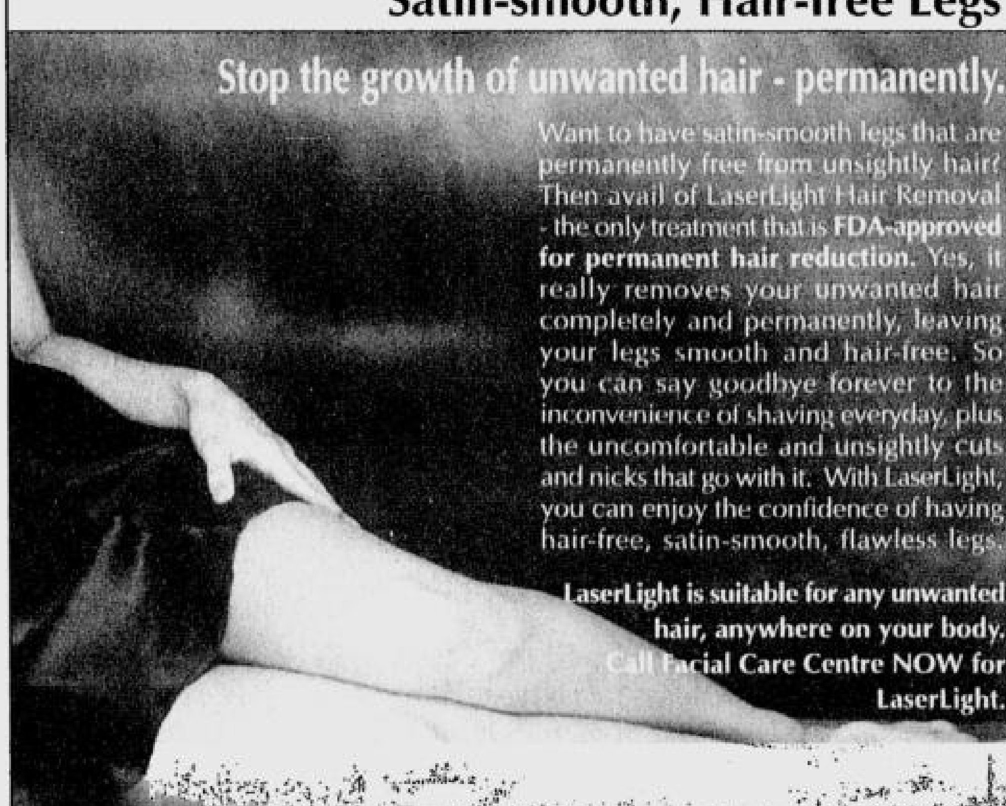

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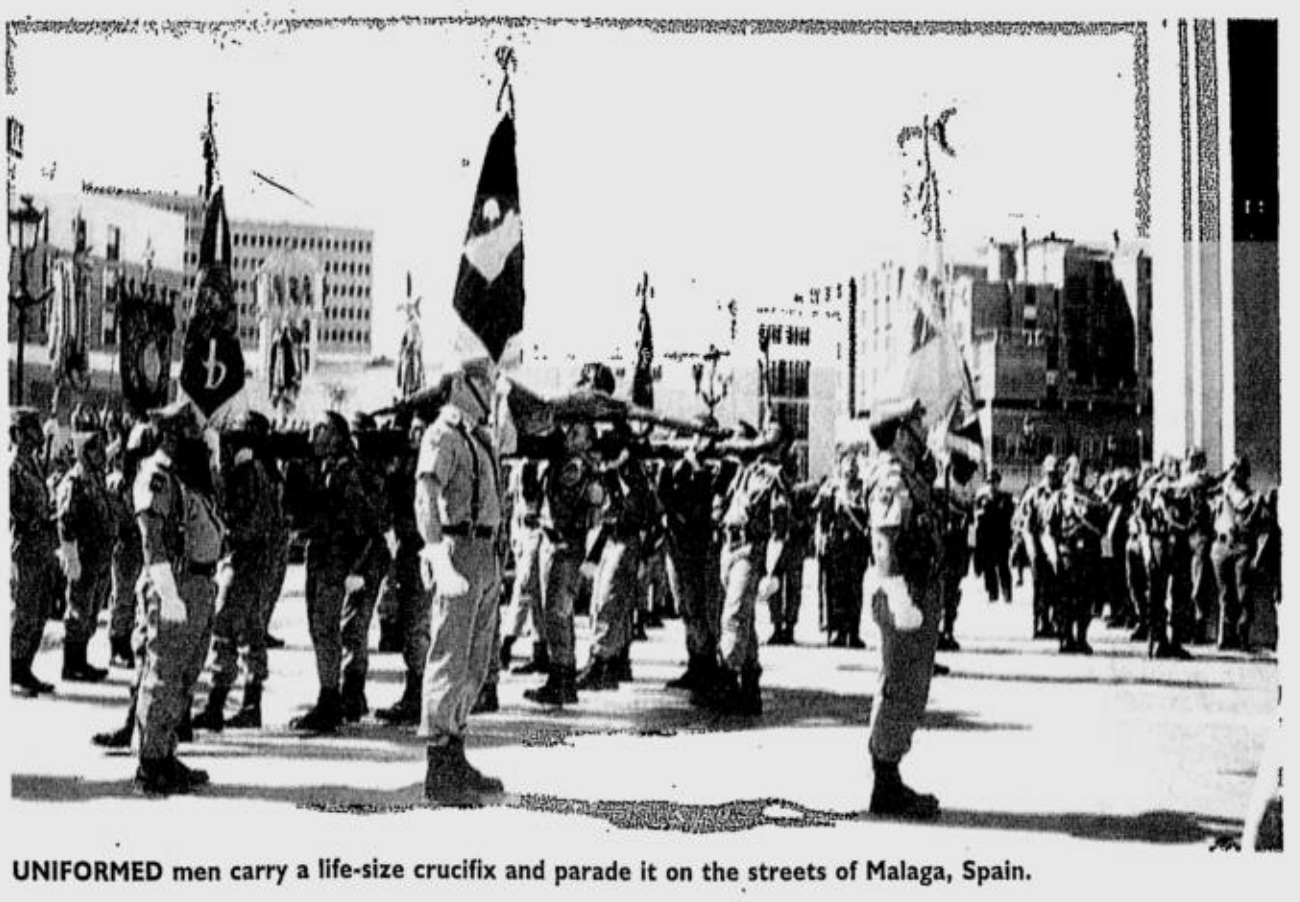


UNIFORMED men carry a life-size crucifix and parade it on the streets of Malaga, Spain.

In Spain, Holy Week is a passion feast

From page D1

church or the brotherhood they belong to, so they would be allowed to take part in the processions.

The penitents dress up in their velvet robes and costumes, some of which even resemble the infamous Ku Klux Klan's.

Starting Holy Monday, people fill up the streets and join the processions that usually start late afternoon and extend to nearly midnight.

Most anticipated

Good Friday is the most anticipated moment when the tradition comes alive in Malaga.

Despite the cosmopolitan atmosphere, the city presents a Holy Week full of symbolism, continuing the tradition that started in the 16th century. With 40 brotherhoods and over 75,000 members, the city exudes the passion of Christ.

Powerful music with bands in bright uniforms holding drums, trombones and trumpets, accompany the procession along each turn.

The life-size images are taken out of the temples and paraded on the streets in their thrones. The crowd gathers on the pavements and clambers up every accessible loft just to get a glimpse of the huge and magnificent thrones.

The 19th-century avenues of Alameda and Marques de Larios, along with the Plaza de la Constitucion, are lined with rented chairs forming one of the main arteries of the Holy Week spectacle.

The streets come alive with beats of drums, sound of trumpets and the marching of the penitents.

Riogordo

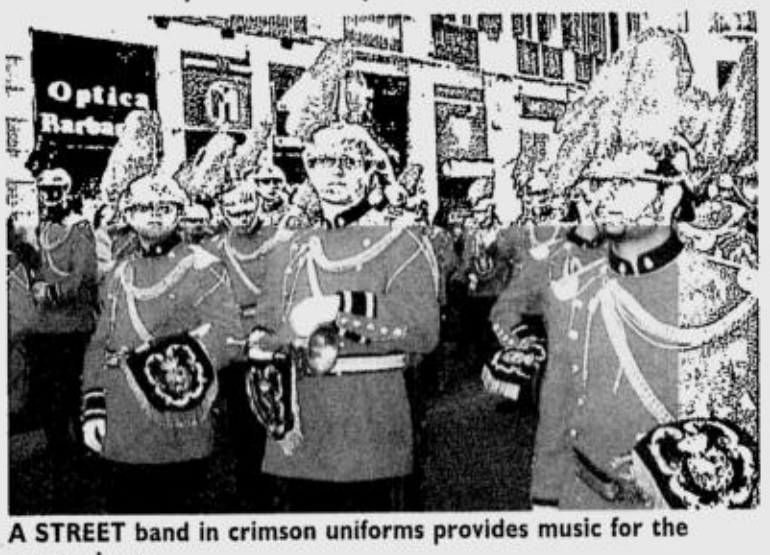
Meanwhile, in the outskirts of Malaga is a quiet village called Riogordo, where the life and passion of Christ is played out in a live, open-air presentation participated in by residents. Over 200 performers play Biblical characters from Jesus, Mary Magdalene, Pontius Pilate and King Herod to the disciples and the people of Jerusalem and Nazareth.

For years, Riogordo has enjoyed international fame for presenting the story of Jesus Christ every Good Friday in very colorful fashion.

The drama, which starts at around 2 p.m., is presented on a grassy hill and the audience is seated in monoblock chairs, most of them wearing *buri* hats. Despite the scorching heat of the sun, the Malaga breeze makes the occasion a windy afternoon.

For inquiries about the Holy Week package to Spain, e-mail singapore@tourspain.es

LADIES dress up to watch the procession.



A STREET band in crimson uniforms provides music for the processions.

THE AUDIENCE at Riogordo

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THELMA Gana, Alice Briones, Pitoy Moreno, Chit Gohu and Norie Ongsiako

Culture advocacy group honors a generous benefactress

IMELDA Cojuangco and granddaughter Patricia

PHOTOS BY BETOY JOHNSON

NENE Quimson and Nelly Gonzales

CHITO Madrigal Collantes, Manoling Collantes and Millie del Rosario

DIPLOMATIC SWIRL

By Amiga

IT was one of those anybody-who-is-somebody-was-there parties with all the glamorous ladies dolled up in their glad rags at the very posh and exclusive Tower Club presided over by **Johnny Litton**, graciously making sure all the spiffy gowned women were happy over the appointments. Friends For Cultural Concerns of the Philippines (FCCP) decided to honor the one and only **Meldy Cojuangco**, who has a gazillion charities but always finds room for more. For the 22 years of the group's existence, she has generously been there, whether for monetary or for moral support.

During the elegant dinner of Chilean sea bass and overflowing wine, **Cez Manalo**'s quartet from the Manila Symphony Orchestra II performed for such worthies as **Chito** and **Manoling Collantes**, **Bonnie Sycip**, **Millie del Rosario**, **Bea** and **Jaime Zobel**, **Paz Yuchengco**, **Lorna Laurel**, **Lourdes Montinola** and **Mary Prieto**. Afterward, for the special program, the entire MSO accompanied celebrity pianist **Nena Villanueva**. Other numbers included performances by the FCCP Chorale and the Opera Guild's **Jonathan Badon** and **Lorna Llanes**. Dr. **Manny Almelor** serenaded the honoree.

Six grandchildren belonging to **Ning-Ning C. Yulo**, **Marvi C. Yulo** and **Choy Cojuangco** did a rap number while **Nene Quimson**, **Menchu Concepcion**, **Norie Ongsiako**, **Thelma Gana**, **Tereret Liboro**, **Chloe Romulo Periquet**, **Thelma Gana**, **Opat Villonco**, **Mari Lacson**, **Nes Jardin**, **Mark Lambino** and **Jimmy Laya** danced the Tertulia Alcamfor.

Kudos to Thelma Gana and Cez Manalo for a tribute well done. It is rumored that the FCCP's incoming president will be Chloe Romulo Periquet, a most popular choice, so the rest of the aspirants will have to wait another

CULTURE/ p.D7

DANNY Dolor and Cez Manalo

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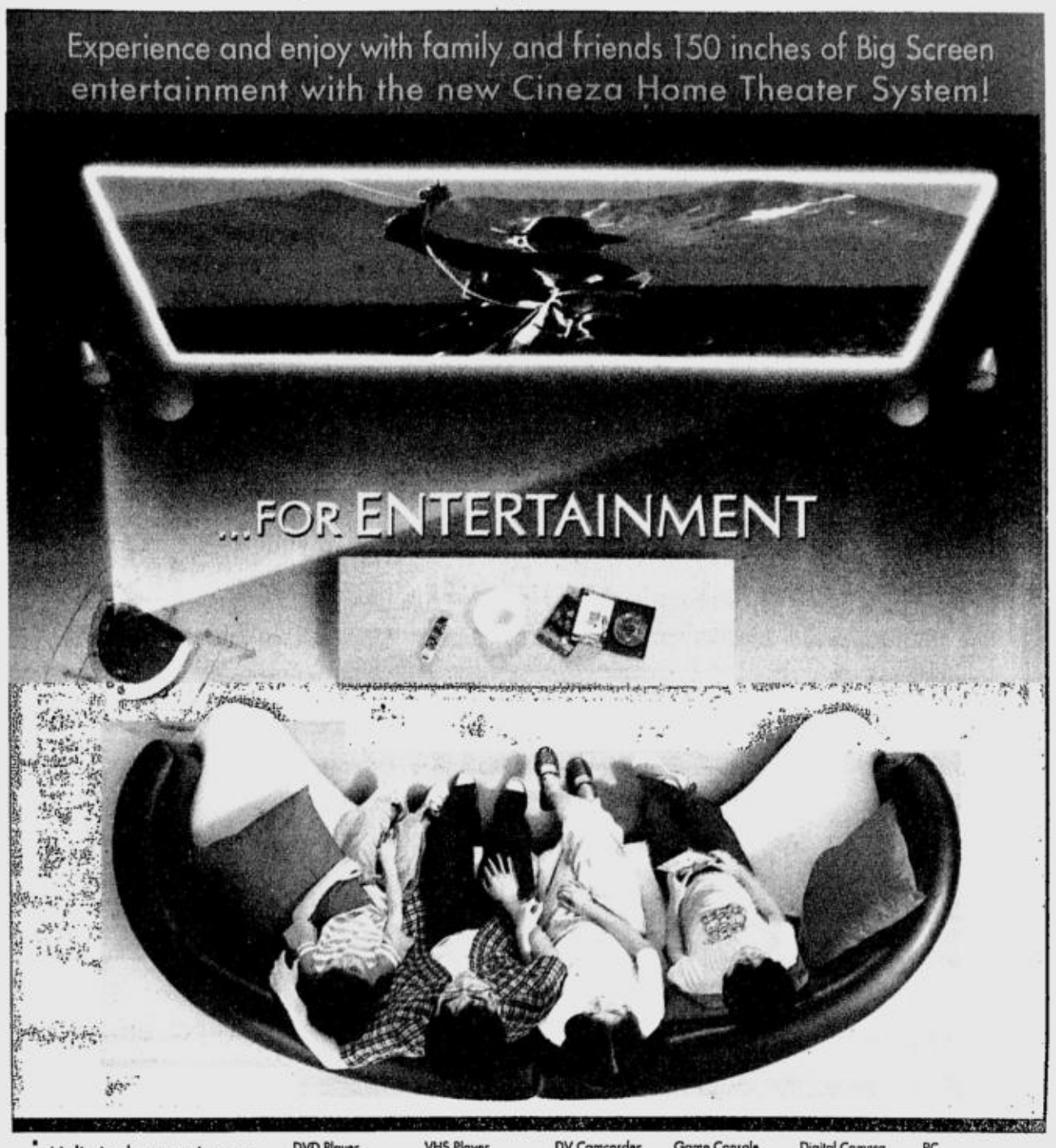

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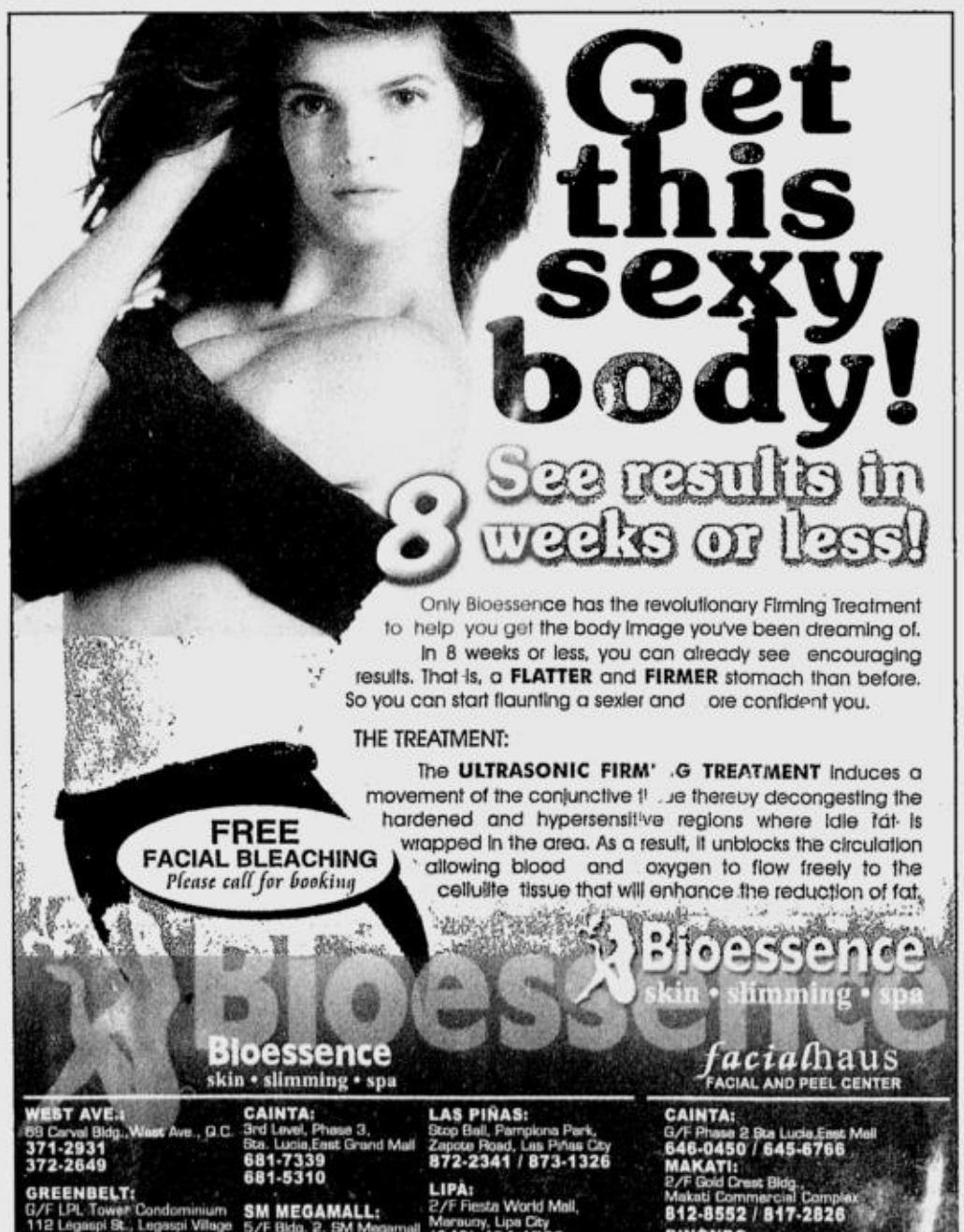
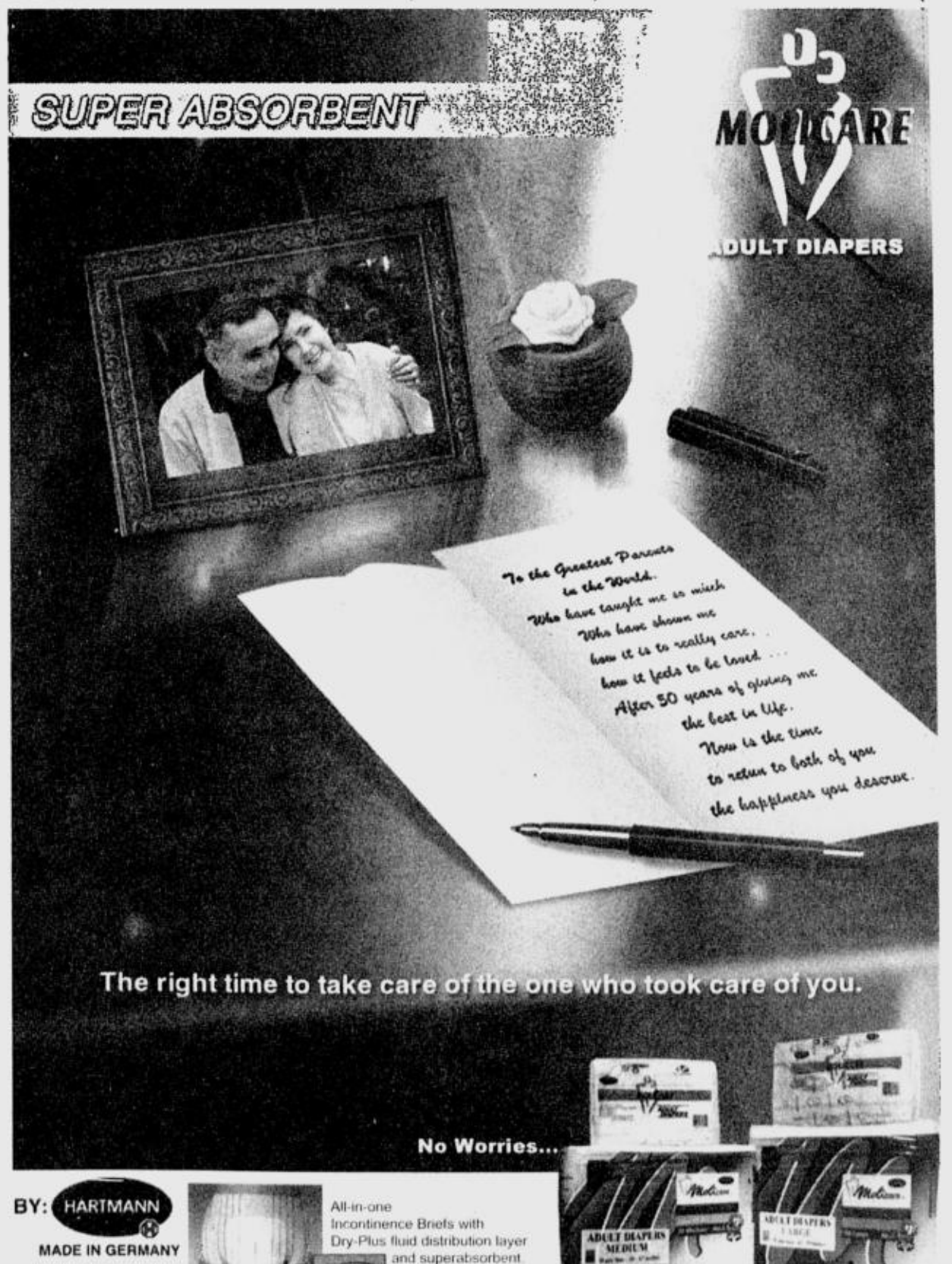
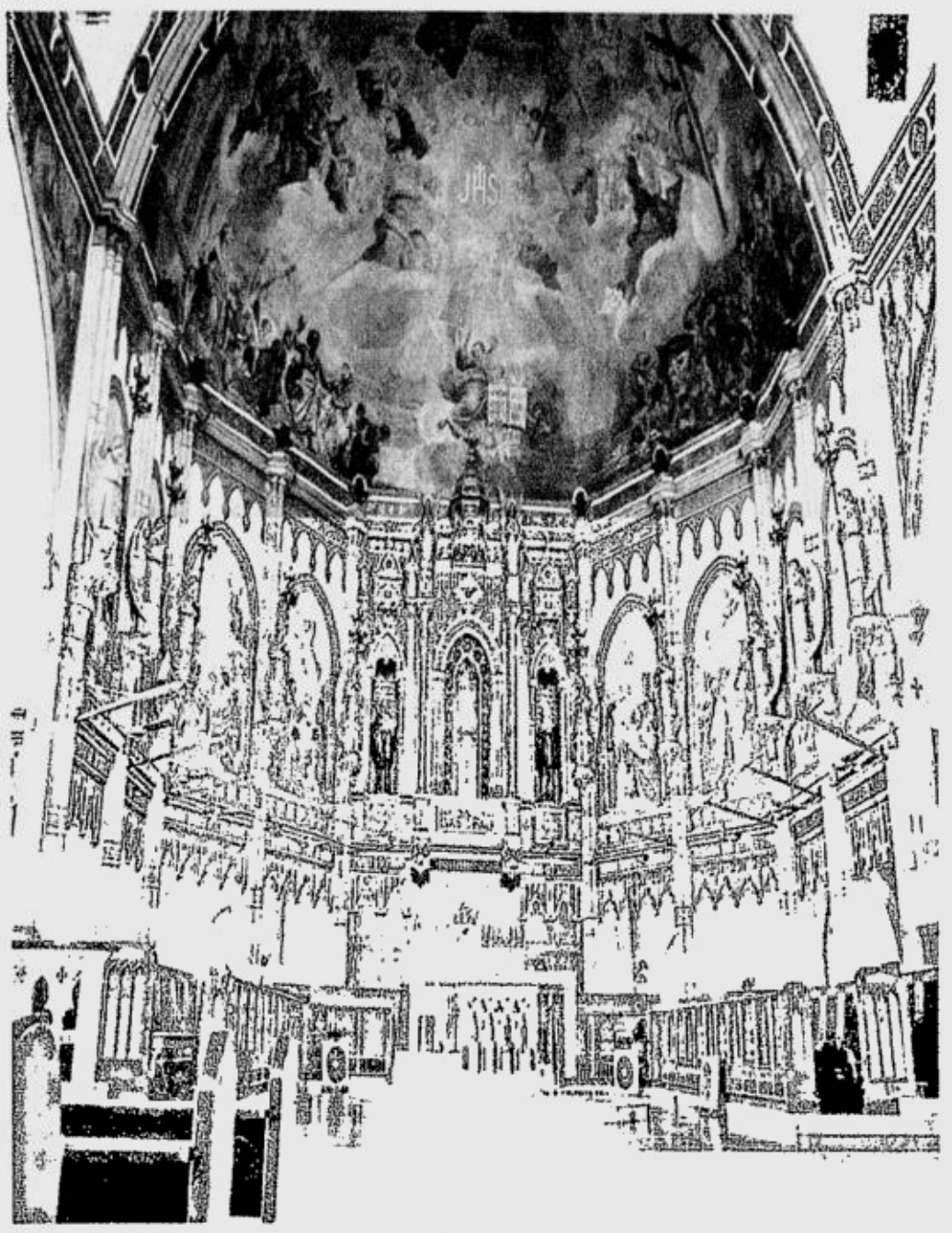




It is not Sahara outside of the malls. Manila can be a pleasant summer place if you just take a second look at the plentiful heritage structures and greenery around



NEO-BAROQUE interiors of San Beda Chapel (Abbey of Our Lady of Montserrat)
PHOTO: JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Heritage walk of Manila

SPACED OUT

Augusto F. Villalon

WE are so attuned to the subtle nuances of tropical seasons that as soon the rains dry out and we pick up the first cool breeze of October, we instantly go into Christmas mode. When February winds blow Christmas weather away, the mode reluctantly slides into summer. Summer in the city is far from the languid, tropical summers that are associated with seaside cities. Having forgotten that it is a seaside city, Manila has shut out the breezes from the sea, replaced the green from its open spaces with concrete, and choked its shade trees along avenues and streets to death. Summer in the city is a killer.

Summer scorches, bathes city folk in pools of perspiration, makes them think of taking refuge in beaches, in the mountains, or, for those who can, in provincial home towns where there is less asphalt, where nature cools the earth and clean air makes breathing less labored. Summer is a time to think escape, but the city holds most of us captive. The easiest way out of city heat is behind the doors of any of the air-conditioned malls.

It is not the Sahara Desert outside of the malls. Forbidding as Manila may be, it holds many secrets. These are the forgotten places that make life in Manila interesting, and give meaning to life in Manila. Beat the summer heat by joining a Heritage Conservation Society walking tour.

Heritage tours

So what to do this summer in Manila? One thing to do is to walk the city with the Heritage Conservation Society tours. The HCS tour series has invited experts and scholars to lead walks through the San Beda Chapel, the Art Deco Far Eastern University campus, the University of Santo Tomas campus and the Luneta. Provincial tours have been organized to Malolos and San Miguel de Mayumo in Bulacan. Three tours are offered for the summer.

Climb the walls! The HCS walking tour of Intramuros starts in front of the Manila Cathedral on Plaza de Roma. Intramuros comes to life as you walk the streets while hearing the story of Intramuros, becoming familiar with its landmarks (existing and vanished), and taking a close look at the *baluartes*, *ravelines* and *bastiones* that are part of its massive fortifications.

The HCS takes a "Beaux Peep" at today's Escolta, once the power street of Manila's financial and business center. Relive the "Peace-time" days of Quezon's 1930's Manila and see some of Asia's finest examples of Beaux-Arts and Art Deco architecture that have managed to survive the wrecking ball. Visit two buildings by the renowned architect Andres Luna de San Pedro (the only son of painter Juan Luna), the First United Building (formerly Perez-Samanillo) and the Regina Building. See what the street has become today and be aware of the cultural (and economic) significance of Escolta. Take a look at the boarded-up but still elegant El Hogar Filipino by the Pasig River.

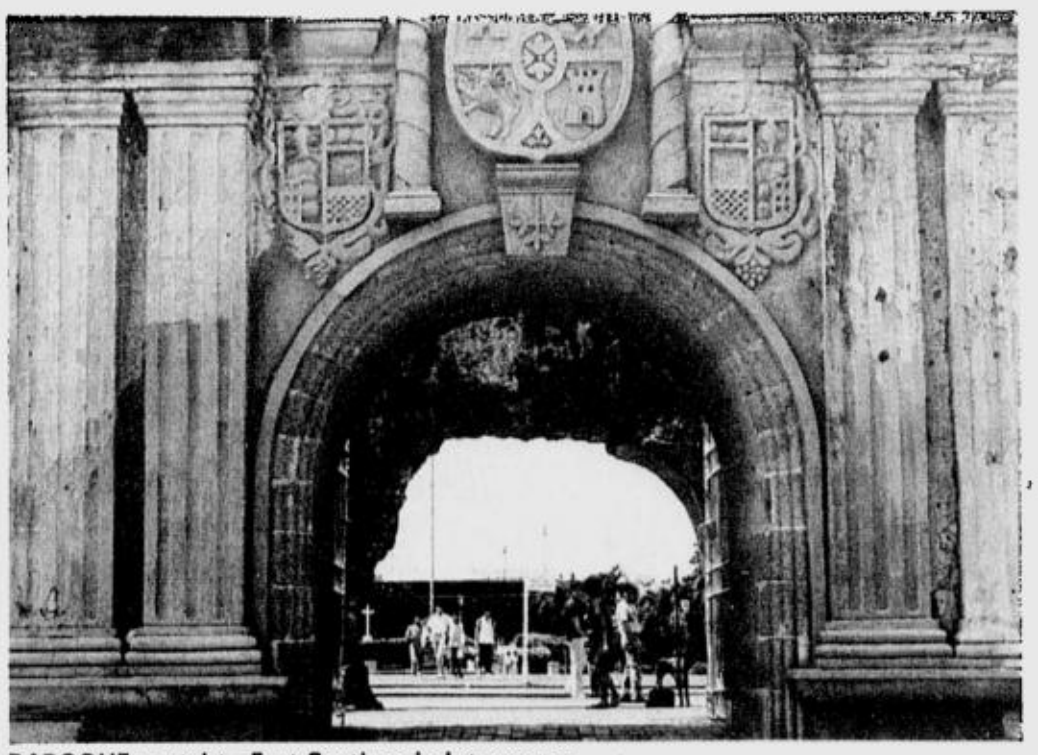
Locsin complex

The HCS lives "La Vida Locsin," walking through the National Artist for Architecture's tour de force, the Cultural Center Complex. This is a step back into the heady days of the New Society, when the young wore elephant bell-bottoms, the over-the-top Miss Universe pageant was held and the rigors of Martial Law smothered the nation. The CCP complex is vintage Leandro Locsin: it consists of the CCP itself, the Folk Arts Theater, the Design Center Philippines, the Philippine International Convention Center and the Westin Philippine Plaza, possibly the largest collection of Locsin buildings in the country. Learn (or be reminded of) the grandiose Imelda Marcos vision of the CCP complex as the unifying focal point of her scheme to unite Filipinos through the pursuit of a national aesthetic (a vision still appropriate for our continued fragmented cultural image of ourselves as Filipinos). Learn how Locsin distilled the forms of Filipino vernacular architecture into the modernist vocabulary.

Tour schedule:

- HCS Tour of the Intramuros Walls: (Saturdays) April 20 and May 18; tour starts at the entrance of the Manila Cathedral in Intramuros.
- HCS Architectural Walking Tour of the Escolta: (Sundays) April 14 and May 12; tour starts at the Carriedo Fountain in front of Santa Cruz Church.
- HCS Architectural Walking Tour of the CCP Complex: (Saturdays) March 23, April 27, May 25; tour starts at the main entrance of the

HERITAGE/ p.D5



BAROQUE portal to Fort Santiago in Intramuros

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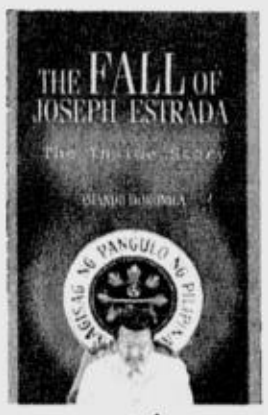
Edsa 2
unplugged.



The popular uprising called "Edsa 2" transfixed the nation and caught the world's attention as the administration of Philippine President Joseph Ejercito Estrada ended in a firestorm of marches and mayhem. Now, Amando Doronila, one of the country's most respected journalistic minds, and the country's most awarded newspaper, the Philippine Daily Inquirer, present two books that give you all you need to know about "Edsa 2."

The Fall of Joseph Estrada is the fascinating definitive inside story behind what rea / happened during those fiery days that changed a nation's destiny. Using the most accurate and exclusive sources and revelations from key players, this book brings us behind the scenes of this important event that saw the removal of Joseph Estrada from power and saw Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo rise to the country's highest office.

Between Fires features 15 different ways of looking at the causes, effects and legacy of the turbulent Estrada years. Spanning the spectrum from economics to politics to the streets themselves, these essays together form an illuminating, exhaustive look at this controversial administration.

Available at all National Bookstore and PowerBooks branches.

INQUIRER books
Co-Published by Anvil Publishing, Inc.

ART DECO interiors of the modern University of Santo Tomas Chapel (Santissimo Rosario Church) by architect Fernando Ocampo

PHOTO: JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN.

Heritage walk of Manila

From page D4

Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Fees: P200 for bona fide HCS members; P400 for guests and non-members; P50 for HCS student-members; P100 for students who are not members (present a valid ID)

Time: All tours start at 3:45 p.m. (please check location of meeting points) and run for approximately two hours.

Bookings and information: Bookings are essential. Call the HCS Secretariat at 522-2497, 521-2239, or text 0917-8300293.

Wear light clothing, bring hats or umbrellas, and most importantly, wear sensible walking shoes.

Provincial tour schedule is being planned for the summer season, so call the HCS Secretariat for information.

This is the first of a series of articles that hopes to get people out of the malls for at least an afternoon to experience the special places that set Manila apart from other cities in the world. There is still a lot of forgotten heritage that remain unappreciated beneath Manila's forbidding surface. Much of that urban character is vanishing at a fast rate. Getting Manileños to rediscover their city will hopefully get them to appreciate it more, and most importantly, develop a missing pride of place that will lead to their more active participation in improving the quality of life in our harried city. It may make Manileños believe that there still is hope for their city.

Visit www.hcsphils.org

E-mail the author at afv@pacific.net.ph.

CESAR N. Sarino of the Malacañang Heritage Foundation beside a Juan Luna masterpiece

Malacañang Museum gets a face-lift

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IS it not sad that many Filipinos know more about the accomplishments, beliefs and even speeches of American presidents like Abraham Lincoln, John F. Kennedy than Filipino leaders?

Is it not also unfortunate that we know more about the history of countries like the United States, France, United Kingdom and Spain, and we are more familiar about their works of art, rather than our own?

It is a sad reality, but Presidential Adviser Cesar Sarino said the refurbished Malacañang Presidential Museum at the Kalayaan Hall would hopefully bring the rich Filipino culture closer to the Filipino people.

"We envision a museum that would showcase our struggle for political freedom from the time of the datus and the sultans to our current fight for economic freedom," Sarino told the INQUIRER.

"The fight for freedom would just lie into waste without it being recollected. It is therefore a good judgement that we ourselves make a record and documentation of all the archives that the past presidents had in their conquest for true democracy," he added.

Sarino, who was also appointed MHF chair, initiated the reconstruction of the Malacañang Museum with the aid of a private group of curators, architects and researchers.

Members of the board of trustees include former Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo, who is vice chair, and Napoleon Abueva, Jaime Laya and Cid Reyes. Executive director is Mae Gaffud.

The MHF has been managing the Malacañang Museum since the time of former President Fidel V. Ramos, under whose watch the MHF completely changed the museum format.

Sarino said the Malacañang Museum under Ramos' time featured the ostentatious lifestyle of a president, which was changed immediately under former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel V. Ramos

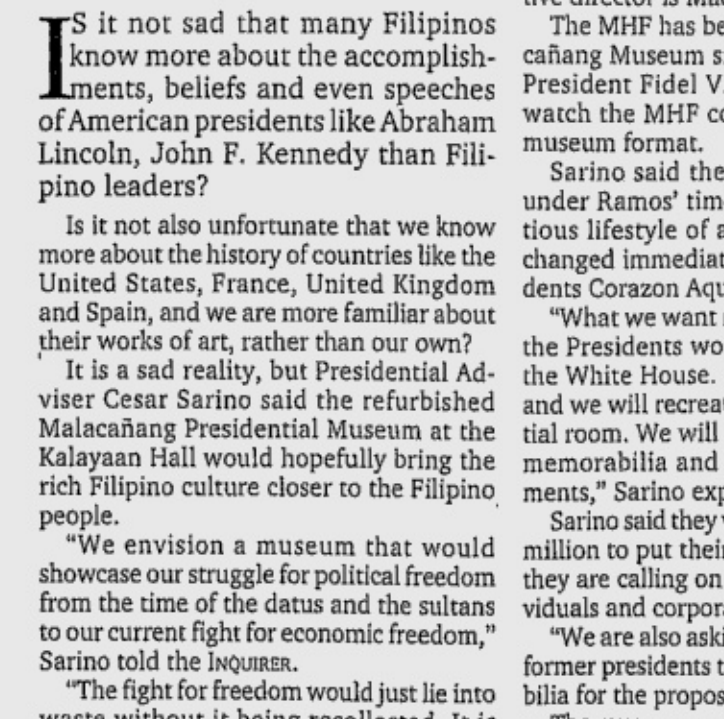
"What we want now is to showcase how the Presidents work and live, a little like the White House. We will have 12 rooms and we will recreate the original presidential room. We will have a short biography, memorabilia and the list of accomplishments," Sarino explained.

Sarino said they would need at least P150 million to put their dream into reality and they are calling on the help of private individuals and corporations to donate funds.

"We are also asking for the families of the former presidents to donate some memorabilia for the proposed rooms," he added.

The museum currently has a lot of photographs of life in the Philippines, riding boots of President Ramon Magsaysay, a chess set of President Carlos P. Garcia, necklaces of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, people power paraphernalia of Corazon Aquino and different memorabilia from Fidel V. Ramos.

"We should highlight our accomplishments and when people go to the museum, we want the Filipinos to leave feeling and experiencing the process of struggle with our heroes. We should highlight what we have accomplished. We must be proud of ourselves," Sarino added.



IMPRESSIONIST IN CUSTOMS' EXHIBIT

IMPRESSIONIST Sergio "Toto" Sodusta II opens his exhibit at 6 p.m. today at the Social Hall of the Bureau of Customs in Port Area, Manila. Outgoing Customs Commissioner Titus Villanueva will cut the ceremonial ribbon.

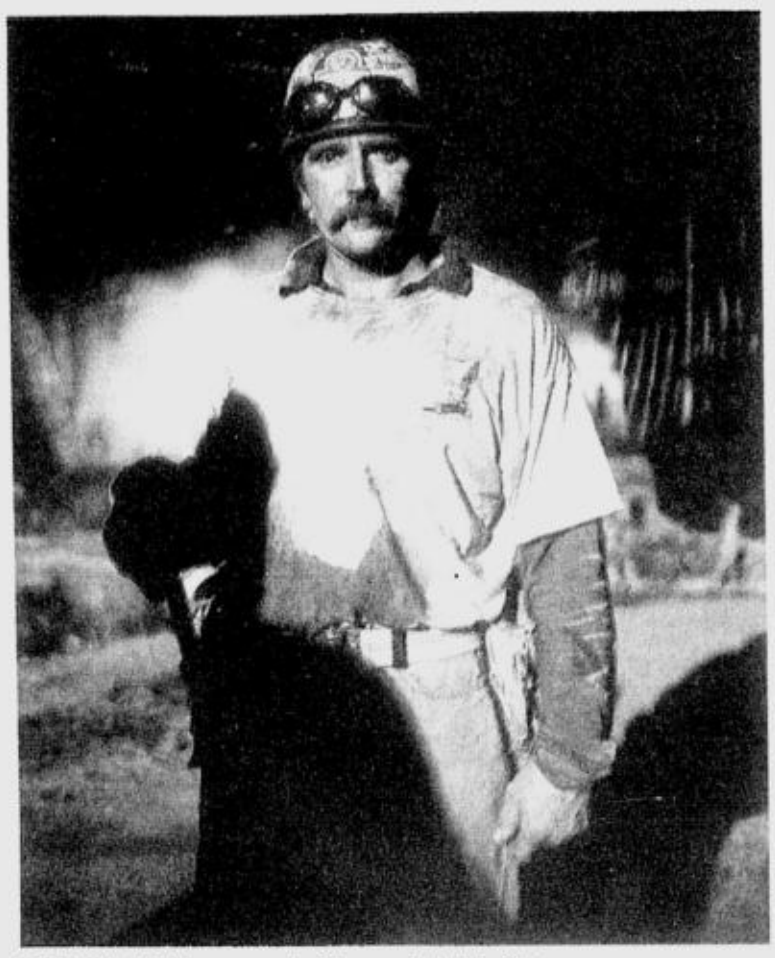
Lovely images of the ugly

By Constantino C. Tejero

A photo exhibit at the Met Museum memorializes 9/11

ART has a way of beautifying ugliness, prettifying misery. An obvious example is the movies, where a lush cinematography often glosses over the wretched lives being depicted.

The real artist can use the trick without compromising the truth or surrendering the integrity of his work, but, in fact, dramatize the subject by the sheer contrast. This could be seen in the photo exhibit "After September 11: Images from Ground Zero" at the Metropolitan Museum of Manila, until March 15, commemorating the terrorist attack on America late last year.



OCT. 24: Welder wounded by exploded bullets.

NOV. 8: Smoke rising through sunlight.

The unique exhibit, organized by the Museum of the City of New York and presented by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State of the United States of America, is on a world tour, with Manila among the first 20 cities to host it.

These are 28 still shots by award-winning New York landscape/street photographer Joel Meyerowitz, "the only artist given unimpeded access to Ground Zero." Powerful and often dramatic, the photos document the rescue efforts, recovery of bodies, demolition and excavation of the World Trade Center towers.

The photographs also depict the camaraderie among the workers in the zone. The more carefully composed ones illustrate the interrelationships of sky and earth, human figures and metallic debris, light and shadow, wind and smoke.

At the start of the display is a photograph titled "The Blue Hour, September 1982," showing the two glittering towers in the distance against the twilight sky, like yellow jewels amid blue water and gray rocks.

This is immediately followed by "The Wall of Remembrance, February 2002," showing the diagonal lines of brown floorboards leading to the central figure of a black-jacketed human figure standing amid wreaths and various mementos, a white T-shirt printed with "Flight 11, 77, 93, 175," "America Stands United" and "To Honor the First Murdered of Sept. 11, 2001." These are placed against a wall painted with the names and flags of 87 countries and the bold lettering "In Memory of the International Victims of the World Trade Center Attack."

Dramatic chiaroscuro is rendered in the photographs titled "Five More Found, Oct. 26," "Bringing out the Dead, Midnight, Dec. 7" "A Bugler Plays Taps, Oct. 24" "Smoke Rising through Sunlight, Nov. 8," "The Winter Garden, World Financial Center, Oct. 5," "Firemen and Cloud, Oct. 26."

Two of the loveliest shots are "The North Wall, Oct. 26," a dramatic view of the skeleton of gray building against an azure sky with pink clouds; and "An Autumn Afternoon, Oct. 7," a jolting image of skyscrapers with protective drapes of red, orange and maroon, in the vicinity of brown debris, red cranes and white clouds in the clear afternoon sky.

Says Meyerowitz of his documentation: "It is a privilege to work at Ground Zero. Everyone who works there has been transformed by the spirituality of the place... My task is to make a photographic record of the aftermath: the awesome spectacle of destruction; the reverence for the dead; the steadfast, painstaking effort of recovery; the lives of those whose act of salvation has embedded itself deeply into the consciousness of all of us in America and around the world."

Probably the most dramatic of the photographs is the one titled "The Twin Towers, Sept. 25." It is a two-panel panorama of Ground Zero with the void where the two towers used to stand. It is now considered sacred ground.

Of erotics and miniatures

By Gino Dormiendo

EROS has been very much a part of the Filipino psyche, truly a dominant force from birth to death, which should easily explain our people's preoccupation with sex and sexuality.

It therefore now comes as no surprise that an exhibit mainly based on erotic writing by Filipino poets, "Eros Pinoy, An Anthology of Contemporary Erotica in Philippine Art and Poetry," has been successfully mounted in a commercial gallery, right at SM Megamall's Art Center, by the Crucible Gallery (with the cooperation of Anvil Publishing).

The exhibit mounts the majority of the original works as earlier published in the book, which was edited by Alfred Yuson, Ben Cabrera and Pandy Aviado.

Owing to the sensitive nature of the exhibit component, easily accessible to the general public, a critical proviso has been prominently posted at the entrance to remind gallerygoers that the "visual and tactile objects on display are conceived out of openmindedness and a liberal attitude," at the same time cautioning the "prude and overly sensitive to refrain from viewership," and finally admonishing "that a certain maturity is required from consumers of adult materials."

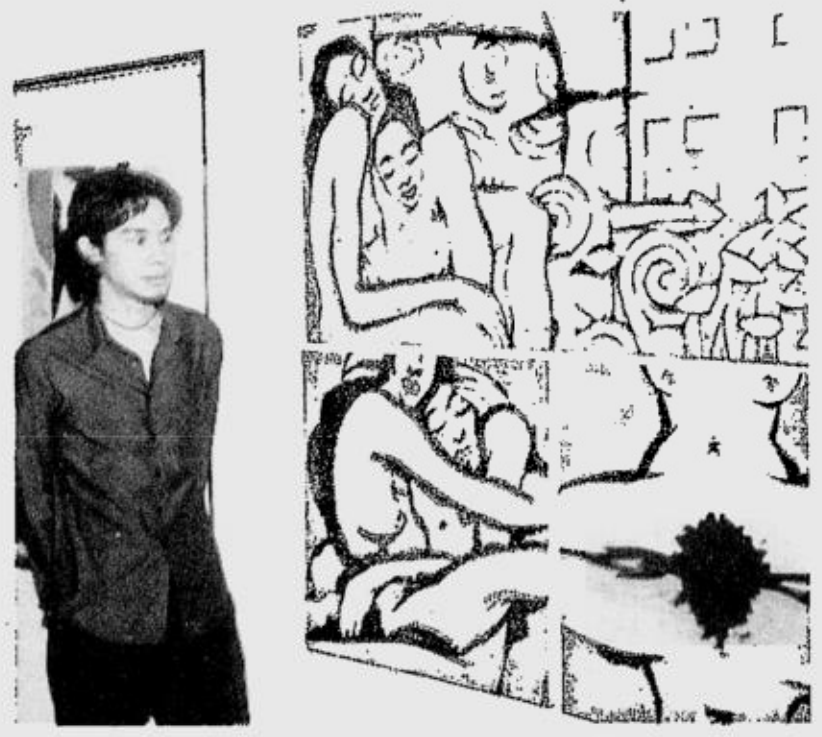
That precisely is the one thing that remains unsettling about a show of this kind: The graphic depiction of sex and carnality. While I certainly admit to a high level of liberalism in art, singling out the erotic element as the be-all and end-all of an artistic endeavor may defeat the very purpose for achieving sexual emancipation.

There are admittedly a number of essential truths that artists must convey about sex which have nothing to do with nudity, copulation or perversion.

The works generally depict images of erotica: Nudes, passionate lovemaking, vignettes of the Pinoy's sex life, phalluses galore.

The works of the National Artists, namely Vicente Manansala, Arturo Luz and Jerry Elizalde Navarro, hanging side by side with the other artists, seem dated when judged by their sexual forthrightness. Manansala's "Voyager"(1972), for instance, is a charcoal rendering of a scene with subjects engaged in pot session, its participants garbed in the period's look and wear. Elizalde-Navarro's "A Hot July" (1989) shows a naked woman reclining on a chair surrounded by lush foliage.

And deserving of more than just a passing glance are Yasmin Almonte's rendering of a strongly feminist theme in "Ayaw" (anti-rape) and "Without Fault" (motherhood).



ARTIST Fernando Escova with his works

But the most celebratory works are those in the photographic medium: Tato Tarrosa's female nudes and Wig Tysman's as well. Both artists have depicted their subjects with both candor and the right amount of playfulness.

Not to be missed either are Kiko Escora's diptych which shows the female subject as a ventriloquist, her tongue sticking out, aptly paired with the poem "Syrup" by Mike Maniquiz.

Likewise irreverent are Raul Lebajo's drawings "Super Lady" and "Burlesk Queen," nudes of the female figure with their usual surreal touches.

Supremely elegant is Rod. Paras-Perez's woodcut, "Yantra Odalisque," (1979) which show his shifting imagery and use of multiple images.

The two sculptors on the distaff side are Agnes Arellano and Jenny Cortes. Arellano's three works—including a pair of standing terra-cotta figures—are playful renderings of the female and male reproductive organs. Cortes' "Parausan" is a divan of sorts made of narra, *apitong* and *yakal*, which eloquently stirs the viewer to imagine the possible games adults can indulge in within the seat's proscribed space.

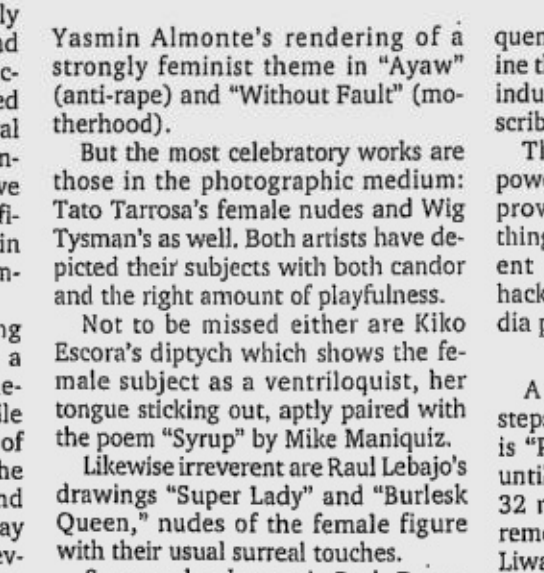
That, to me, is the kind of power that erotic art should have provoked in us viewers, something that goes beyond the prurient interest that opportunistic hacks in the movies and the media purvey as entertainment.

Refreshing

A refreshing sight, just a few steps away from the Art Center, is "Pasnim," (Crucible Gallery, until March 17), an exhibition of 32 ready-made marble mortars remodeled into pots for plants by Liwa Araos. A contraction of the words "*paso*" (pots) and "*tanim*" (plants), the title indeed combines the two talents of this Araos sibling: Miniaturizing trees and elevating ordinary utensils into objects of personal interest.

Araos has a number of finely sculptured miniaturized trees called *bansoy*, a contracted phrase for *bansot na halamang makahoy*. Unlike bonsai, the *bansoy* philosophy uses rainbow branching (in contrast to winter branching in temperate countries), deep pots (bonsai has shallow pots), its façade appreciated from all angles.

"Bansoy," as the nature-nurturing Araos family has coined it, is expressive of this young artist's pitch for achieving balance and harmony in nature as well as in the personal and home environment.



POTTERY by Liwa Araos

E-mail the author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com

Women artists at Shangri-La Plaza, UE alumni at Finale

WOMEN artists of the Saturday Group will stage "Kulay Pinay," March 16-20, at 3/F Shangri-La Plaza Mall (Shaw Boulevard side). Featured are Merci Melchor, Remi Boquiren, Lydia Velasco-Cruz, Inna Naanep Vitasa, Janice Liuson Young, Myra Caymar, Anna de Leon, Migs Villanueva, Mara Cruz, Tessie Pecana, Chuchie de Vega and Lorna Montilla.

"WALL #4" by Red Mansueto at Finale

VISUAL ARTS

GROUP EXHIBIT AT THE FINALE ART FILE. An exhibit of four leading graduates of the College of Fine Arts of the University of the East will be held March 14 to April 9 at the Finale Art File, Makati Avenue corner Arnaiz Avenue (Pasay Road), Makati City. It will feature recent works by Augusto Albor, Joe Bautista, Lao Lianben and Red Mansueto. It is the first off-campus project of conceptual artist Gerardo Tan as UE Fine Arts dean.

ARCE AT CAFÉ RIZAL. Café Rizal (Greenbelt Mall, Ayala Center, Makati City) is hosting an exhibit of 12 encaustic pieces by Antonio F. Arce. "Leaves, Flower and Twigs" runs until April 5.

REYES AT THE GALLERY. Lhuillier Foundation and Cebuana Lhuillier Inc. present "Ryukins and Good Fortune," a major exhibit by aquarellist Leonardo Reyes at The Galle G/F PJL Corporate Center, 1782 Nicar Garcia St., Makati City. Open until March the exhibit will benefit the Mother Ignac Foundation and consists of more than 25 work featuring goldfish of the Ryukins variety.

ILIGAN CITY EXHIBIT. Linya Gallery at GS Padilla Building, A. Bonifacio Avenue, Tibanga, Iligan City formally opens its doors with the launching of a group exhibit dubbed "Paghikay," Visayan word for "feast" or "to prepare food." The exhibit features the works of Michael Bacol, Enrico Lluch and Christopher Rollo from Cagayan de Oro City; George So from Davao City; and Kurt Lluch and Lea Padilla from Iligan City. It will run until March 30. Call (063) 221-6312.

ART IN DENIM. "Art in Blue Denim: Alay sa Bata," a special charity project for Bantay Bata 163, gives a preview of "artworks in denims" at the Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center. The show is open until March 13 at Gallery 101, Kaimo Building, Quezon Avenue, QC. Produced by Levi's/Dockers and Gallery 101, interested buyers will donate P10,000, which automatically entitles them to one raffle ticket. The show will formally open on March 15 and the artworks will be raffled off on March 16. Call 410-0159.

WESTENDORP AT GALLERIA DUEMILA. Galleria Duemila presents a gallery collection featuring the works of Betsy Westendorp. The paintings are soft on the eyes, drawing the viewer into the pristine peaceful surroundings of Westendorp's art. Call 634-3261, 831-9990, telefax 633-6687 or 833-9815.

JUSTINIANI AT RED DOT GALLERY. Mark Justiniani explores the interconnection of information sources in "Transit," an exhibit of recent oil and acrylic paintings at the Red Dot Gallery, Makati City. The artist journeys through various creative processes and takes imagery from several media sources such as the television, advertisements, books and magazi ombining them with those processed through the amera and the computer.

"ROSE" by Lydia Velasco at Shangri-La Plaza

MONTERONA AT GALLERY FIVE DAVAO. Daniel B. Monterona will be holding his latest exhibit at Gallery Five, 5/L J.S. Gaisano Citimall, V. Illustre Street, Davao City.

PAINTING CONTEST AT AYALA. Likhang Sining, an on-the-spot painting competition at the Ayala Museum Galleries, will be held March 16. Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Makati West for the Rotary Int'l. District 3830, Likhang Sining is open to all high school students. Participants must be sponsored by a Rotary Club or an Interact Club of the school where they are enrolled. Call Katrina Tungol at 813-4485 or Mabel Aguilar at 832-3018.

BALUYUT AT THE FILIPINAS HERITAGE LIBRARY. Butch Baluyut mounts his second photographic exhibit, "Women: A Collection of 23 Female Portraits," until March 23 at The Alcove Photo Gallery, Filipinas Heritage Library, Makati Avenue, Makati City. Subjects include Gloria Romero, Kuh Ledesma, Conchitina Bernardo, Susan Arnaiz and Imee Marcos.

KESSARA Arnold, Marianna Hubbard, Russian Ambassador Anatoli Khmelnitski and wife Valentina

PAUL Potassy, Helmut Gaisberger, John Howard and Vina Gaisberger

BRITISH Ambassador Alan Collins welcomes PDI president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez while Mr. and Ms Howard Belton look on.

JOSIE Lichauco, Jaime and Bea Zobel and Mary Prieto

GEOFF Wain, Shiela Teodoro, Lorelei de Leon and Anton Huang

MELLY and Paeng Hechanova

Culture . . .

From page D3

two years.

* * *

As you well know, **Mely Hechanova** loves to cook so anyone invited to her house can expect the whole nine yards. For the dinner *despedida* the Hechanovas tendered for good friend **Tessie Bayot Olasolo** and an intimate group of friends that included Nene Quimson and sister **Boling Reyes**, **Backie** and **Mike Celdran**, **Tessie** and **Bert Macasaet**, **Tere Litton**, and **Maridol** and **Narsing Mabanta**, the lavish buffet included stuffed roast turkey with all the trimmings, *cocido*, salmon, *fabada*. One table was just for desserts! Not for the faint-hearted.

* * *

Minutes before the stroke of midnight that ushered in the Year of the Water Horse, eight white horses from the Manila Jockey Club led revelers in a parade on Paseo de Roxas and Makati Avenue to kick off Mandarin Oriental's traditional Chinese New Year celebration. Mandarin GM **Helmut Gaisberger** donned his Genghis Khan outfit and geomancer **Joseph Chau** mounted a horse to lead the parade. Guests included Makati Rep. **Teddy Boy Locsin** (he must be more photogenic than the other congressman whom we don't see much of) and his better-half **Louie**, **Jullie Yap Daza**, **Rosemarie Arenas**, Dutch Ambassador **Theo** and **Kessara Arnold**, Russian Ambassador **Anatoli** and **Valentina Khmelnitski**, Mexican Ambassador **Enrique** and **Mariana Hubbard**, Cambodian Ambassador **Seyrewath Ek** and wife **Khov Seng** (who were guests of **Helen** and **Sonny Ong**). Other revelers were **Nedy Tantoco**, **Glenn Gale**, **Amando Doronila**, **Jamby Madrigal** and newly named Philippine Ambassador to Hungary **Andy del Rosario**.

* * *

British Ambassador and Ms **Alan Collins** hosted the celebration of British-Philippine relations. The occasion also marked the launch of the British Festival, the 7th Annual Meeting of the Philippine-British Business Council (PBBC) and the 75th anniversary of Unilever Phils.

In attendance were Unilever Phils. CEO **Howard Belton**, PBBC cochair **Peter Garrucho** and **Nigel Rich** of Sutherland Corporate Services. Several exhibits showcased British products, including the Jaguar automobile. Marks and Spencer had a mini-fashion show with models consisting of British embassy staff members, their spouses and children.

Doy Laurel distills thoughts on nationhood in new book

FORMER Vice President Salvador Laurel will launch his latest book tomorrow, 4:30 p.m., at the Ballroom of Wack Wack Golf and Country Club, Mandaluyong City.

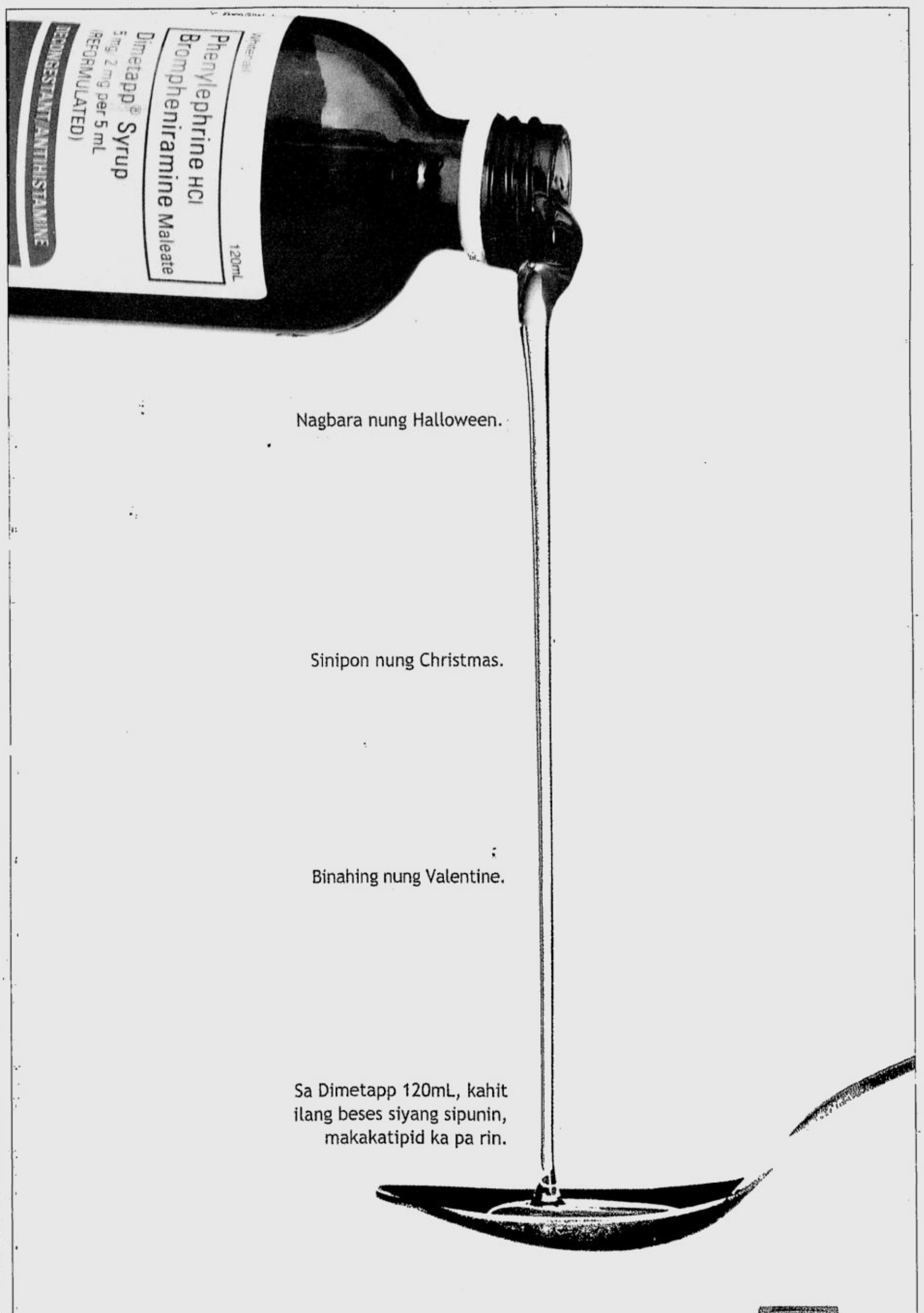
The book, "Through Ordeal and Turmoil," is a distillation of Laurel's thoughts and ideas on nationhood taken from his public discourses during the last 30 years when he served as senator, opposition leader, vice president of the Philippines and foreign minister of the Republic. It covers timely topics such as leadership, nationalism, justice, morality in public office, democracy and the ideal of one world.

The quotations were gathered, selected and edited by Celia Diaz Laurel, Laurel's wife, who also wrote a moving eyewitness account of Laurel's political odyssey, his triumphs and disappointments, his ordeals and sacrifices for his country and people.

The foreword was written by retired Supreme Court Justice Isagani A. Cruz, who expressed the hope that "the reader, specially the young idealist, with an eye for public service, will derive much inspiration from the thoughts of an exemplary leader who had always suited his actions to his words."

Former President Fidel V. Ramos has described the book as offering "valuable pointers for leaders—whether incumbent, aspiring or untested." To Sen. Blas Ople, the book is "partly biography and partly political philosophy."

Laurel has dedicated the book to his elder brother, former Ambassador Jose S. Laurel III, who took care of him during his boyhood and who is celebrating his 60th wedding anniversary and 88th birthday.



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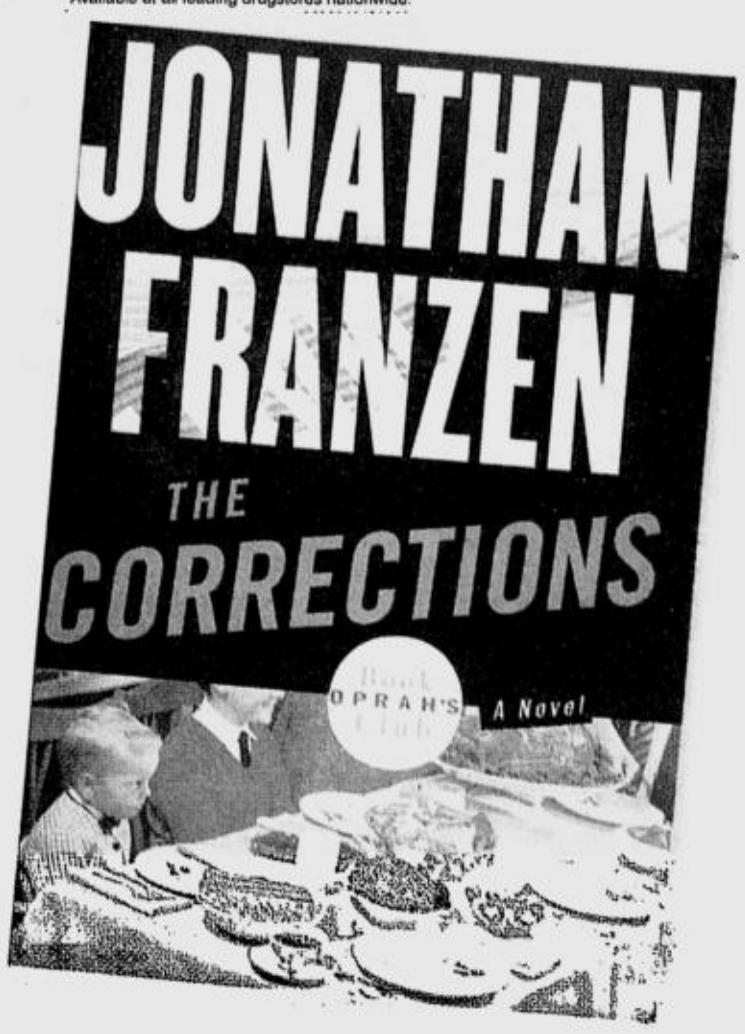

Why Oprah Winfrey was correct about 'The Corrections'

The Corrections
By Jonathan Franzen
Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 2001, 568 pages

By Ruel S. De Vera

REVIEW

THERE are books that you will never forget, books so powerful and sad that they make you regretful and joyful that you dared crack that perfect, untouched spine. Virtually everybody's book of the year for 2001, Jonathan Franzen's "The Corrections" is one of those books, perhaps the best such book in recent memory.

It is a testament to the book's almost supernatural melancholia that all that mayhem and madness arising from Franzen's unflattering comments about having his third novel picked for Oprah Winfrey's Book Club have not removed anything from its potency.

"The Corrections" is, at its essence, a family drama, involving the most typical Midwestern American family one can think of in the Lamberts. But Franzen is quick to show that beneath the surface of this family is a hidden thread of anger and resentment so old and ever-present that it has now begun finally to destroy them.

Patriarch Alfred, now retired, is slipping into madness and senility. Matriarch Enid is holding des-

WHY/ p.E5

This masterpiece is a dark mirror of family life

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How brave and gay is the new 'Portrait'?

By Constantino C. Tejero

NICK Joaquin's "A Portrait of the Artist as Filipino" was a product of its time. When the future National Artist wrote in the 1940s what he called "an elegy in three scenes," he incorporated the styles and ideas of the literary icons of the era.

The title itself was taken from Joyce's novel. The plot mechanics and the principal characters would seem to come from Henry James' novellas "The Aspern Papers" and "The Spoils of Poynton."

The symbolism of the invisible portrait on the fourth wall could be a visualization of T.S. Eliot's theory on the burden of tradition to be carried by the young into the present. The portrait of the young Lorenzo Marasigan carrying on his back his old self out of a burning city is an image straight from an old academic painting of Aeneas carrying his father Anchises from the burning towers of windy Troy.

The heightened language is from Lorca, the Latinate rhetoric is from Rizal and Claro M. Recto, while the sense of theater is from Tennessee Williams. The staging of Bitoy Camacho's introduction to each scene, in fact, is virtually Tom's introduction to the memory play that is "The Glass Menagerie."

It has been said that Williams' women often talk, think and behave like men in drag, because it is actually the playwright's personality he has sublimated through these characters. Shakespeare was a prime progenitor of this kind of concealment (W.H., The Dark Lady of the Sonnets) and gender-bending (men playing women and vice versa in numerous plays).

A DRAMATIC scene from the play with actors Anton Juan, Behn Cervantes, Noel de la Rosa, Ma. Goldie Soon, Tanya Cordero, Marco Sison and Raye Baquirin

An autobiographical or psychological explication of the text is likely to reveal rich layers of subterfuge. Quite often, the persona contains the author's personality. This is not saying that the opposite is not true. This thing, like psychology, can be double-bladed.

The unmasking

The novelty in the World Theatre Project's recent staging of "Portrait" was precisely that unmasking of personae, that is, the transformation of the two spinsterish sisters Candida and Paula Marasigan into confirmed bachelors Candido and Pablito, played by Behn Cervantes and Anton Juan, respectively. (With that, the play was linked to another literary icon of that era, Jean Genet.)

Juan, who also directed, had been quoted as saying that the two leads would sometimes seem to have been originally written for men. When Joaquin, in giving his blessing to the production, commented on the new casting that "it is rather destined," he might just be acknowledging the origin of his characters.

It was quite natural then that these women would be played by men. Thus, the transformation, though major, was not as subversive or disorienting as one would expect. If at all, the sexual repression had been intensified, more so when one considered the period in which the story unfolded.

Otherwise, the basic elements of the play were unchanged. The essentials remained. What had been lost or changed were certain allusions and nuances of language. And it wasn't just a matter of pronouns, either.

For instance, when Bitoy recalled his youth, saying, "Our voices were brave and gay," one could hear some snicker. Or when Candida admonished their boarder Tony Javier, "Last night we heard you and a woman coming," the audience understandably burst out laughing.

The real story

In the passage in which Tony takes leave of the sisters, saying, "Good night, ladies; good night, sweet ladies; good night, good night," he is actually quoting the mad Ophelia bidding adieu to the court in "Hamlet." That line had just lost its rich irony when it was delivered by Tony as a flat "Good night, gentlemen."

The gender twist and repressed sexuality are not too organic to the plot, anyway, or even to the theme, in the way that the invisible portrait is an organic symbol. They're there to add to the tension, in the same way that the imaginary fourth wall is there to expand the imagination.

Because the real story of Nick Joaquin's "A Portrait of the Artist as Filipino" is of the spiritual versus the material, idealism versus consumerism, tradition versus modernity, the heroic versus the crass, sweet nostalgia against bitter reality. This had survived despite the hype surrounding this production and the attention drawn by the performances of the leads.

(Juan had the more theatrical style, with a pronounced elocutionary manner. Cervantes had a more naturalistic approach, and he was particularly good in delivering long lines, breathless and in undertone.)

But even if the war hasn't come, the two Marasigan sisters, like Tennessee Williams' rarefied creatures, who are their kindred spirits, would hardly have survived in this harsh world in the vulgar present, anyway, physically or spiritually, because of the one tragic flaw common to both. It is called the romantic fallacy—too much looking back at the past.

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

ART TART

'Portrait'? What portrait?

Rupert Jacinto would have shot a faster portrait than the three-hour 'Portrait'

ART Tart went to the gala premiere of "A Portrait of the Artist as Filipino," and I must say I had sat for a portrait before and it didn't take this long. I was inside the theater at 8 p.m., and those actors were still talking about some portrait three hours later! **GMA** was there and surely she knew society portraitist **Rupert Jacinto** worked faster, even if all his *matrona* sitters moved as slowly as the crew at Burger Machine.

Art Tart's portrait was not taken by Rupert, though, as he said he was too busy and had to think about the *hulugan* arrangement I was proposing (even if I suggested I'd throw in my refrigerator). The photograph would have been great. My evening gown, a strambotic Goulee Gorospe, my precious gold jewelry which I got from the *subasta* at Tambunting completing the look, my hair in *taras bulba* care of **Mutra** of Salon Varona, and *moi* stretched in my chaise longue I had made *pasadya* especially from Libiran. I would've made it as a Maurice *palangga*! The entire dance floor of Faces would've been talking about me!

Haaay, the '80s. Those were the days. I feel like Candida and Paula in "Portrait," except that while they long for the good old days of *tertulia*, I'm terribly missing my weekends at Jaloux. While they reminisced about the good old days of poetry that came out in the Blanco y Negro, I am aching for those Sundays when I would borrow the Chronicle from my *ka*-mahjong to check if I was at least a blind item in "People Are Talking..." Some days, when I look back at all those memories, I wonder, was I going to the right places?

Curiously, I was ruminating on the same question at the "Portrait" gala. *Madre mio*, there wasn't any cocktails! What they had instead were tuna sandwiches and hotdog waffles in plastic, and they were being sold to the guests! *Que horror*! Not even the instant coffee was free! The playwright, **Nick Joaquin**, was, of course, looking for *cerveza* and no one there brought a drop of alcohol. It would've been an honor to offer him my *baon*, but I didn't think he liked *pomelo* in his gin.

But it was a most interesting scene, Quijano de Manila—the most fashionable in a gray wool suit and mock turtleneck—on the same floor as **Aiza Seguerra**, all the past Candidas and Paulas from **Naty Crame Rogers** to **Daisy Avellana** to **Barbara Perez**. Barang looked as regal as ever, I couldn't help but be reminded of her immortal line in one of her movies: "*Wala na si* Syirley. *Si* died in a car *cras*."

And the play? Well, it was a major class act. **Behn** and **Anton** were great as Candido and Pablito. **Floy** was very manly as the narrator Bitoy Camacho. **Loly Mara** fabulous as Pepang. And the beautiful set design by **Ernest**, *magnifico* indeed. Everyone was great. Too bad they didn't have enough money to actually show us that portrait.

E-mail arttart@trust-me.com

The beautiful and damned

By Cora Llamas
Contributor

REVIEWS

"*CONTRA mundum*!"

What started out as half-hearted bravado became a genuine valiant stand for one's truth even if it means death. And director Anton Juan does give his characters—Behn Cervantes' Candido, his own Pablito, and the rest of the conflicted characters of Nick Joaquin's opus "A Portrait of the Artist as Filipino"—a glorious transfiguration at play's end.

The final image is very difficult to forget: an era literally frozen in time, its immortalized ghosts etched in defiance, horror, sorrow, or all three, with a lot more emotions brewing underneath the surface.

A lot has been written about the sexual switch of the material's original leads from female to male. But the beauty of the acting is that one hardly feels the change at all.

Cervantes and Juan's characters strut, move and fret on stage as if they were actually born into the anachronistic Marasigan family and the fast decaying house.

Even the absence of livelihood in their old age can be attributed to the failure of their artist father to teach these two gentlemen how to stand on their own two feet; many scions of the landed gentry live on the property of their parents without learning a decent trade, thinking that the money would last them forever.

Candido and Pablito exude a propriety that is out of step with the gaudy modern times, and an aristocracy that intimidates, demands respect, and yet invites pity or scorn from a fast-rising working class that cannot understand it.

Granted that Juan wobbles like a delicate little boy who never grew up, and that Cervantes nags like a stiff schoolteacher, but there is little doubt that these two gentlemen hold court in their own turf. They may be vanishing royalty, but royalty nevertheless.

One can argue that, like the aging peers of their national artist of a father, they've damned themselves by choosing to live in past glory. But what does the future offer? The loss of ideals personified by their own family and friends (Amiel Leonardia, Loly Mara, Fonz Deza, who pull off the difficult task of mixing earthy pragmatism with dignified class), the crass commercialism of the dancing bar girls, or the unbridled opportunism of sexy rat Tony Javier (Raymond Bagatsing)?

Armando Ruiaquio's set design subtly accentuates this conflict. The wooden pieces and chandeliers that surround what was once a plush sala look at times like antiquated décor, sculptured vultures, or a hangman's gibbet, depending on the play of lights on the backdrop. Red mirrors anger, orange hints of a proud past, and then of course the clouds of war that augur the destruction of a civilization.

Most of the supporting characters who visit the Marasigans look downright hysterical and pretentious beside the brothers. The journalists out to get a scoop regardless of truth and sensibility, the noveau riche who look like Hollywood copycats.

There are times the scenes littered with these characters are downright annoyingly loud and chaotic. You don't know whether the actors are overplaying their parts, the blocking is really that messed up, or Juan deliberately made these characters look gauche. But, as in one scene, all it takes is a few firm, cool words from Candido to remind these upstarts of their place.

ACTORS Jimmy Yambao, Fides Cuyugan Asensio, Lindo Obach and Loly Mara, with Behn Cervantes and Anton Juan as the two old bachelor brothers, pose in front of the Marasigan mansion.

The three-act play does tend to stretch a little, and the last scenes where the old middle class come in during the La Naval procession can still be tightened. But overall, the play and the performances are still affecting.

The audience makes the journey with Floyd Quintos' Bitoy, the only other authentic character in the play aside from the Marasigans. His narrator is not a detached chronicler, but an involved participant who hails the past even as he wrestles with its demons.

'V-Day'

EVE Ensler's "The Vagina Monologues" moves out of its enticing intimacy to become a bold passionate statement. In the first productions, the original English and the Tagalog translation, only three actresses in simple but elegant black were illuminated separately by a gentle light as they emoted women's real-life accounts. The whole atmosphere reminded one of the sanctity and privacy of a confessional, laced with ribaldry and humor.

In "V-Day," the women—about 70 of them—are dressed in flashy red. They don't confess, they proclaim. The general air is one of triumph—of ladies long repressed finally asserting their rights and taking their place in the sun. There is very little of the subtletly found in the original productions. Even some of the most dramatic monologues tend to become protest (if occasionally funny or weepy) pieces.

"V-Day" is more of an event than a dramatic presentation. Judging from the real-life testimonies of emancipated formerly abused women, it is also a wake-up call. And the ladies, from the seasoned actresses to the first-time thespians, give it their all. That alone creates an enthusiasm that carries the audience through the long three hours and makes the occasional lapses forgivable (cast and crew only had a day to rehearse).

The song renditions of Celeste Legaspi and Roselle Nava are also welcome uppers. Unlike last year's version, the merging of the English and Tagalog passages happens more smoothly, and the interplay of the languages sound more natural and unforced.

It also helps that the director (Monique Wilson?) has positioned the original actresses of "TVM"—Dulce Aristorenas, Tami Monsod, Lara Fabregas, Lynn Sherman, Missy Maramara, Arlene Borja and Harlene Bautista-Sarmenta—to set the tone by making them appear at the end and the beginning.

It is also rewarding to see some of the newer numbers connect with the original dramatic pieces, infusing the "V-Day" cause with greater poignancy.

My personal favorite is Bibot Amador's clipped, measured, yet tortured portrayal of an Afghan woman sentenced to a living prison by the Taliban. As her last words sink into your consciousness, Legaspi, Wilson and the New Voice Company sing the imploring "Prayer." The images they leave last you long after the curtain comes down.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Leadership, charisma, politics and the theater

By Bart Guingona
Contributor

I MUST confess that, at the last Philippine Forum (a conference for "the successor generation" of leaders) at the Manila Peninsula, I was one of those harping about our President's leadership "style" after she gave her keynote address (she had left by then).

OF STAGE

It was a bit difficult for an artist to sit back and enjoy what I thought was a speech full of crows about the achievements of her administration with regard to the GNP, interest rates and the return of investor interest in the country.

I certainly don't mean to belittle the achievements of her administration, achievements that have been realized because of an impeccable work ethic and an academic's sense of administrative priority. There is no doubt that we are better off today than we were a year ago, at least economically.

But then, I complained about her lack of charisma and the frustration of not having at all been inspired by her speech. I felt a bit frustrated that she was unable to seize the moment. Being in a room full of young leaders, many of them still idealistic and dynamic, most of them quite influential, should have been an opportunity for rallying the troops. Instead it became an occasion for defensiveness and arrogance. How utterly disappointing, I thought.

What really bothered me about that afternoon is this: If she was unable to move me—me, who possesses a basic understanding of what she is efficiently, if slowly, achieving—how in heaven's name would she ever be able to galvanize an inert country into action? To electrify an indifferent, if not hostile and anarchic, mass of people into kinesis? To constantly clarify the point of destination for us, her followers, so that rowing the boat won't seem so damned futile and exhausting?

Aspirational

I have always maintained that as human beings we must always be aspirational because it is the only way we can ever live brilliant and meaningful lives. And as human souls, we need inspiration to guide us in our quest to achieve what we aspire to. In the theater, the quest for the ideal, for perfection, is our *raison d'etre*, and therefore I beg your pardon for being unforgivingly demanding of my leaders.

My friend and colleague Jaime del Mundo, whom I highly respect, once began directing a play with a very succinct allegory that put things into razor-sharp perspective. He told us we were all about to embark on a journey up a mountain. No one had ever been there before, but as the director, his job was to hold the map.

It's possible that he himself could get lost in the trail, and he encouraged us to share our ideas about how best to get there. But as a leader, the job of keeping the peak in his and our sights rested squarely on his shoulders. I thought about that very often before the opening night of our last play, "Promises, Promises."

When production week of "Promises, Promises" kicked in, I had the opportunity to experience firsthand, albeit on a microcosmic level, what our President must be experiencing.

Before you sneer at me for flattering myself that my job is in any way similar to that of the President of the country, consider the following: I had to be leader of a company whose resources were stretched to their limits; I had to constantly meet with potential investors and pitch the project to them (I wish, though, that that required me to go on a junket!); I had to assuage hurt egos and play politics with warring factions within the company to get them to remain productive through their differences; I had to be daddy and *kuya* and psychoanalyst and stern mentor all at the same time; and all the while, I had to keep a clear view of the peak.

Admittedly, because there is little money in the theater, it is easier for a leader to operate from platforms of idealism and not have his vision be corrupted by other considerations, such as the perpetuation of power, or of material temptation.

It is when you are a leader, that you realize the importance of having beside you a stage manager and production manager, managers you can delegate confidently to. You need your eyes firmly focused on the big picture. In truth, after the President's speech, I wanted to hire her as my production manager. She certainly impressed me as a great "micromanager."

The difficulty with being a designated leader is that there are expectations you have to live up to whether you like it or not, whether, in fact, you've asked for it or not. Francis of Assisi, in Julian Mitchell's play "Francis," simply sought his personal happiness by literally living according to the Bible, poverty and all. He suddenly and at first unwillingly finds himself responsible for followers he never asked for, but at the same time cannot reject because it was his vision that was responsible for creating them in the first place.

When we put up AAI, all I ever wanted to do was stuff that no one else wanted to do. Plays no one would dream of putting up, much less hire me for. Little did I know I would have to one day be answerable to those who have chosen to share my vision.

As my production manager drolly put it, "*Wala kang magagawa, ginusto mo 'yan, eh.*" How right. You can't ever pursue an ambition without having to deal with the consequences of your actions.

Paying tribute

I remember one musical (not "Promises, Promises," thank God!) where, through all the critical savaging I had to take, I had to keep the morale of my cast up, reminding them that the vision was much more important than having to please anyone else.

This may sound Machiavellian, but seeing all the hard work they were doing, and for so little financial remuneration, I realized that the least I could do for them as a leader was to feed their spirits by paying tribute to the value of their work since I couldn't very well fill their pockets. And that was not deception either because we really did it for more than the money, however corny that may sound to you.

It suddenly occurred to me a few days ago, when I was thinking about that other production that that was my true baptism of fire in the art and craft of leadership. Facing a cast and crew and having to personify "grace under pressure" is a role I sometimes abhor.

I sometimes wish I could behave like a spoiled egotistical artist, give in to the swings of my temperament, and not have to be so damned graceful under pressure. Alas, the people I am now responsible for make it impossible for me to behave as if I belonged in a vacuum.

Sacrifice is part of the leadership shebang, I guess. As a follower, a citizen (especially in a thanklessly needy country such as ours), I am willing to undertake the most arduous journey with a leader who will at least make me feel good by constantly pointing out the peak, the vision to me. It will certainly make the journey more bearable.

Sense and direction

Look at it this way: If our President were our director, and we the citizens were cast and crew, and if the legislators were the production and artistic teams, and if the constitution were the script, then how unreasonable would it be to ask that the long, tedious, tension-filled rehearsal hours be given sense and direction (*kaya nga* "director," *eh*) and therefore inspiration by the director?

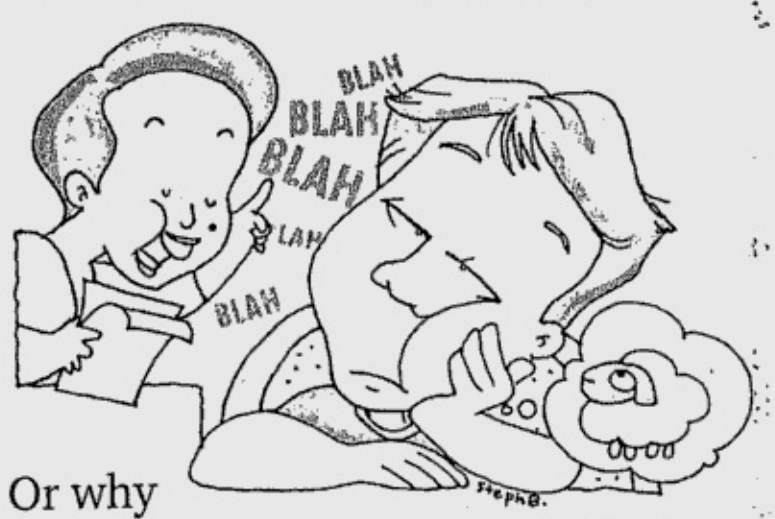
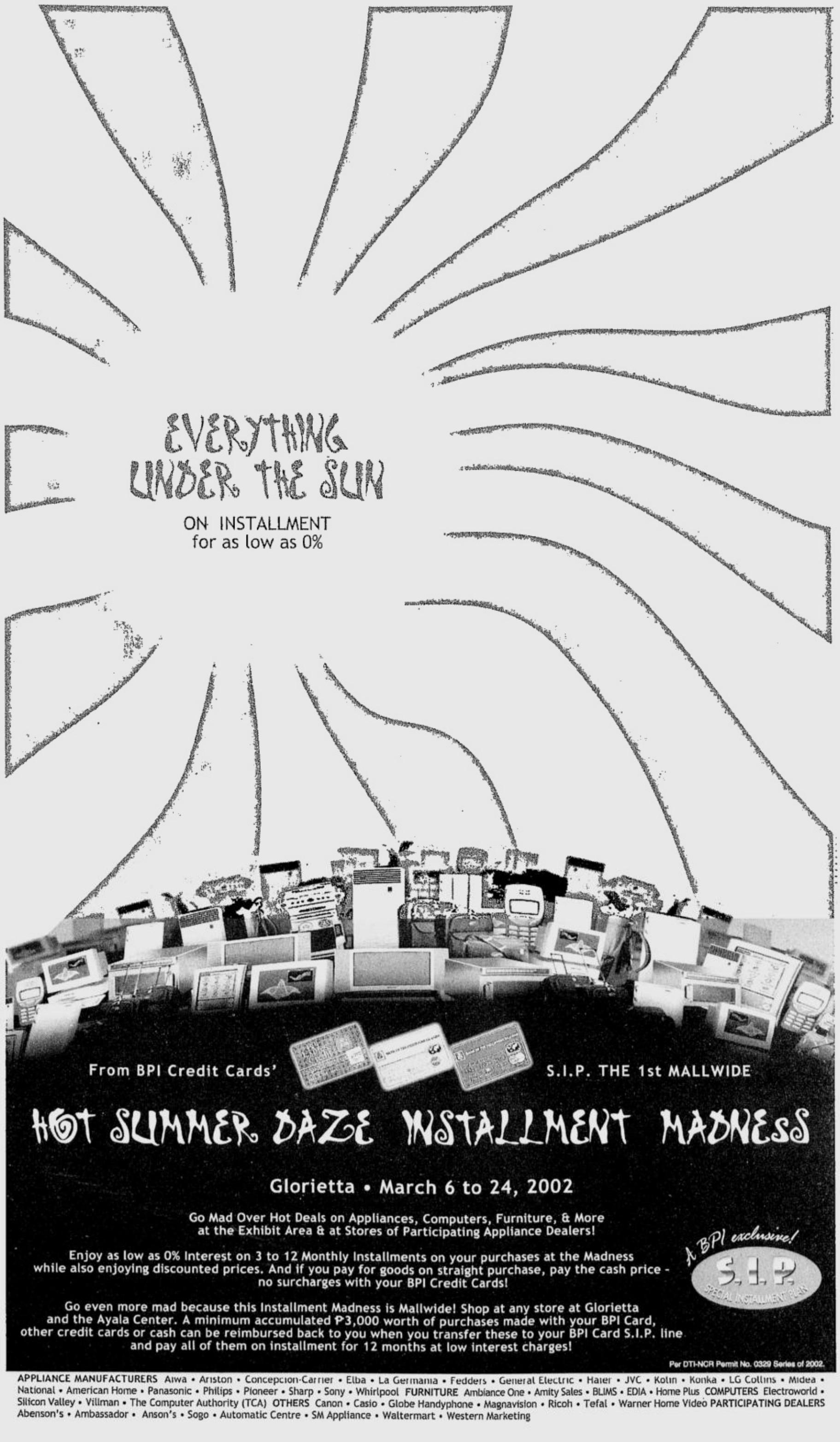


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

Or why GMA should hire a theater manager

In fact, should not our leader constantly remind us about our goals, articulating them in our language, explaining to us why they should be fulfilled and galvanizing us into action by making us stakeholders, inspired by the flames of a vision we can share with her?



MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS

A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO

PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY

SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

GARAPATA BLOOD

BY JOHN PAUL CUISON

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Bobby McFerrin, Susan Richardson, Sam Donaldson

Happy Birthday: You will want to get out and do more with friends this year. Your interest will lie in helping others to help themselves. You will develop friendships with older individuals who can offer you added wisdom and a different perspective. You will have plenty of opportunities but don't take on more than you can handle. Your numbers are 9, 13, 22, 31, 34, 38

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You have so much to offer serious-minded groups that are fighting for a cause. If you join in the fight you will also meet some interesting people who can offer you friendship or possibly something more.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Things may not go according to plan today. Prepare to accept whatever is going on around you and give everything a chance to settle down.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Nothing will stop you from getting ahead today. You will be articulate, intelligent and well-versed in whatever it is that interests you.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You should stop procrastinating and prepare to invest in something that you have been thinking about for some time. Your home and family can prosper if you look into products or services for your home.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You may not feel the same way you did this time last year. Make a concerted effort to change whatever you must in order to feel good about yourself and your direction.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Get busy and don't stop until you are satisfied with your work. You have the edge today if you really want to make things happen. You will have great ideas and the people you work alongside will be happy to follow your lead.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You should plan to do something creative today. Children may play a role in your life. Things that you can do with close friends or the youngsters in your life should be on your agenda.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You may feel a little stressed by the amount of things you must get done. If you are diligent about your accomplishments you will do okay

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You can make new friends today if you share your thoughts and contribute new ideas to groups that you join. You will have a desire to travel but you don't necessarily have to go far.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): You can make changes today that will send you off in new directions. You are adaptable, curious and certainly full of good intentions. You will get recognition for your ideas

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You will have the ideas and the ability to describe to others exactly what you feel should be done. Your insight and determination will be respected and admired. Don't hold back; tell it like it is.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You may want to take it easy today. If you've been feeling under the weather you should get plenty of rest and refuse to let anyone dump responsibilities on you.

Birthday Baby: You were born with dignity, high energy, and a strong sense of conviction, which all adds up to leadership qualities. You are generous and popular.

BEN

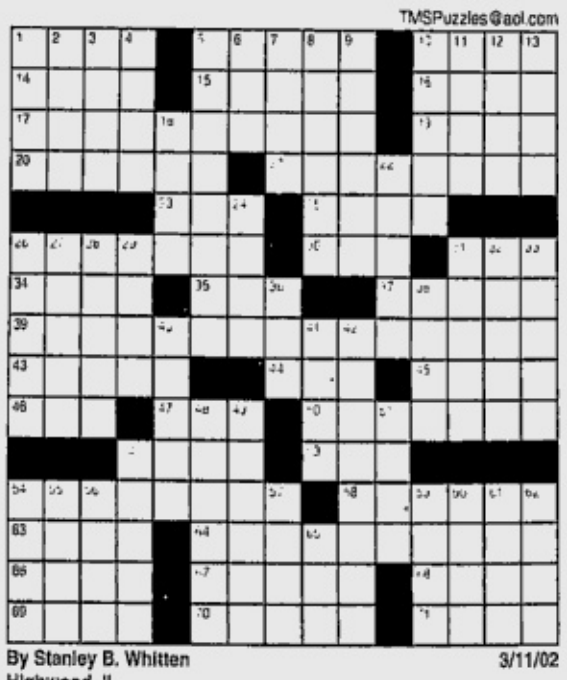
BY DANIEL SHELTON

MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com



By Stanley B. Whitten
Highwood, IL

3/11/02

ACROSS
1 Dutch cheese
5 Use credit
10 Guitarist Hendrix
14 Machete
15 Broadcaster
16 Part of USMA
17 Drink choice
19 __ bene
20 Multi-speaker system
21 Water-powered engines
23 Compass pt.
25 Bunny moms
26 Atlantic vacation spot
30 One-time connection
31 Unit of work
34 Fragrance
35 Knock
37 Twangy
39 Spike Jones classic
43 Squeeze
44 "Are __ Lonesome Tonight?"
45 Launch forces
46 USNA grad
47 Exclamations of surprise
50 Destroyers
52 Vegas machine
53 Meriwether or Grant
54 Dashboard gauge
58 Relaxed
63 "Damn Yankees" vamp
64 Drink choice
66 Coastal bird
67 Shaquille of the NBA
68 Bomb type
69 Sea of Asia
70 Convulsive breaths
71 Big cheese

DOWN
1 Flows back
2 Sap
3 African plant
4 Wasteland
5 Yokohama farewell
6 19th-century Wimbledon winner
7 Part of Q.E.D.
8 "Canto General" poet
9 Plant fungus
10 Singer Joplin
11 God's image
12 Spouse
13 Lupino and Tarbell
18 Consider
22 Form of bingo
24 Actor Morales
26 Italian bowling game
27 Decorate
28 Deceive
29 Large, commodious boats
31 Cosmetician Lauder
32 More crude
33 Luster
36 Double over
38 Jason's ship
40 Wooden peg
41 Spirit
42 Burial services
48 Grandstander
49 Breastbones
51 Forest denizen
52 Little
54 Gymnast Korbut
55 Gloomy
56 __ podrida
57 Deli breads
59 Wild shot
60 Yugoslavian leader
61 Slaughter of baseball
62 Turns down the lights
65 Chart

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

V	I	C	A	R		H	E	R	S		S	C	A	M
A	D	O	B	E		O	R	A	L		T	A	R	A
M	E	L	E	E		S	I	Z	E		I	R	O	N
P	A	D		F	R	E	E	Z	E	I	R	A	M	E
		C	R	E	E	D			V	I	S	T	A	S
S	T	A	I	R	S		C	H	E	N				
H	O	L	T		T	H	A	I		S	A	B	E	R
A	B	L	E		S	E	R	V	E		L	A	V	A
M	E	S	S	Y		A	L	E	X		I	C	E	T
				O	R	L	Y		T	I	C	K	L	E
O	L	D	A	G	E			P	O	S	E	D		
T	H	E	B	I	G	C	H	I	L	L		R	A	P
T	A	C	O		I	R	A	N		A	M	A	N	A
E	S	A	U		M	O	V	E		N	I	F	T	Y
R	A	F	T		E	W	E	S		D	A	T	E	S

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1/23/02

KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA

LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

Why Oprah Winfrey . . .

From page E1

perately on to the vestiges of the life she knows, ruining everyone around her in the process.

Eldest boy Gary is responsible to a fault, angry at himself for being so. Middle child Chip is utterly irresponsible and becoming even more so. Youngest daughter Denise is a chef whose secrets threaten to catch up with her own cold detachment.

All this begins to come together when Enid manages to blackmail or otherwise force her children to come home to St. Jude for one last Christmas before, well, everything changes. What she doesn't realize is that everything already has.

Franzen first introduces us to each of our characters and then combines them, not in a graceful sauce, but in a painful feast of honesty.

Franzen is a masterful novelist, perhaps the brightest of the new generation of American fictionists. His delightfully heavy prose brims with adjectives and verbs that dance and draw your attention—and refuse to let go. He peppers his pages with paragraphs so dense they're practically opaque.

Like the world's greatest dime-store magician, Franzen keeps changes tack and pulls new tricks with every chapter. He stages an e-mail exchange, and then jumps into a subconscious conversation, pulling next into a dream sequence before, believe it, showcasing a cast of malevolent talking turds.

In the course of the book's 500-plus pages, he describes and discusses, with stunning clarity, C.S. Lewis' "The Chronicles of Narnia," Lithuanian politics, railroad engineering, Austrian cuisine and the cost of everyday living in New York. He can fashion his sentences into whatever shape he wants, and you will want to read it.

But "The Corrections" is a book full of rueful sighs and bitter memory. The Lamberts and their dysfunctions are so real that the book becomes a dark mirror of family life as we know it. It turns the little joys and gestures many treasure, or claim to do so, into grenades of doubt. The book will lay waste to any willful self-deception you have about family life, and you will read it because it may well be the best sad book you will ever read.

You will read it because of sentences like: "Evenings of plain vanilla closeness in his black leather chair; sweet evenings of doubt between the nights of bleak certainty. They came to him now, these forgotten counterexamples, because in the end, when you are falling into water, there was no solid thing to reach for but your children."

Even as the Lambert children provide Franzen ample opportunity to showcase his breathtaking talent, it is Alfred and Enid who truly occupy this book's black hole of a wounded heart. If you believe the Lamberts' disparate parts are sad, imagine their misery as they combine for just one holiday.

The book gets sadder with each page, yet Franzen's portrayal of the détente and destruction behind marital and filial life is so honest, so irresistible, it will make anyone think twice of having children.

"The Corrections" stops time. It refuses to be read slowly, forcing you to take in every angry word, every tasteful clause at its dictated pace. Like family, it forces you to do things you may not want to do on your own, or so Franzen will show you.

An addictive downer, "The Corrections" is Jonathan Franzen's masterpiece of modern-day sadness, a novel of such aching beauty you will hang on to every word as the rest of you wants to put it down because it's just too painful to absorb. It is true literary greatness that excises a heavy price from its readers, and you will give in because it is the correct thing to do.

Available in hardcover at Powerbooks

Anita Meily's book on widowhood

ANITA S. Meily, noted marriage counselor, columnist, author and a sought-after speaker on the lecture circuit, will launch her book "And Life Goes On...," tomorrow at the residence of Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin at Villa San Miguel. The book is a selection of columns on marriage and family life written by Meily and her late husband Joe, and columns she continued to write after his death.

Joe and Annie Meily were former past president couple of the Christian Family Movement. Joe was in the process of compiling columns for the book when he suffered a fatal heart attack on Jan. 23, 1993, after a speech he and his wife gave at La Consolacion College.

"Nine years after Joe's death, this book is finally a reality. I hope it will help couples and young people all over the country find love and form lasting relationships," said Meily.

NORMA Sanders, philanthropist Belen Martel, US embassy senior administrative officer Robert Lane and William Shaw Foundation Inc. president Alfredo Velayo

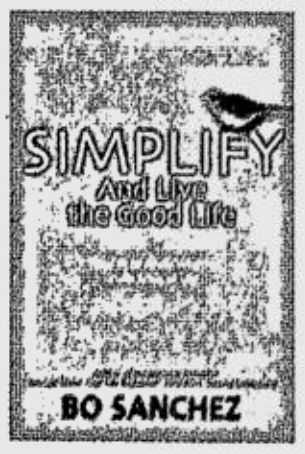
International School gets ready for transfer

THE INTERNATIONAL School Manila (ISM) launched its development campaign, "Building the Future," at the American ambassador's residence recently. ISM's board president Aernout C. van der Gaag and superintendent David Toze briefed the leaders of the business and diplomatic communities of plans for the state-of-the-art campus nearing completion in Fort Bonifacio and the campaign's goal to raise $3 million over the next three years, for enhancement of the school's facilities. ISM will move to the 70,000-sq-m campus in July in time for the opening of SY 2002-2003.

Guests at the launch included philanthropists Belen Martel and Maria Chan; William J. Shaw Foundation Inc. president Alfredo M. Velago; Australian Ambassador John Buckley; Jerry Isla of Joaquin Cunanan & Co./Price Waterhouse & Co.; Nicolas Florio of Caltex Phils. Inc.; Mr. and Ms Terry Emrick of Ford Motor Company Phils.; Mr. and Ms Joost Vink of Philippine American Insurance Co.; Mr. and Ms Joaquin C. Loyzaga of Optical Authenticators; Mr. and Ms Michael Escaler of All Asian Countertrade Inc.; Marjanne Prins and Bernard Rees of Organon Phils. Inc.

Another launch will be held in Makati's business district.

Religious and inspirational books to be launched



BO Sanchez, National Bookstore's Author of the Month, will launch his latest book, "Simplify and Live the Good Life," at National Bookstore Shangri-La on March 18, 5-7:30 p.m. The book is a guide for the journey toward personal happiness.

Sanchez is the author of several inspirational books such as "Thank God He's Boss," "You Can Make Your Life Beautiful" and "Embraced." He is the founder of various organizations such as Anawim, a special ministry for the poor that provides a home for the abandoned elderly and children; Shepherd's Voice Publications, a media ministry that publishes Catholic literature; the Light of Jesus Training, Community and Counseling Center, where he shares his mission of imparting the word of God through seminars, workshops and counseling all over the country.

As a special treat to guests, Sanchez will be giving a short inspirational talk at the launch.

Launching her book simultaneously is another inspirational writer, Rosanne Romero. "Amusing Grace" is the first collection of articles from her column "Kitchen Scribbles," which appears in the Catholic inspirational magazine Kerygma. Romero and her husband are members of Ang Ligaya ng Panginoon community and are much sought-after speakers for gatherings of Catholic prayer groups nationwide.

Ricky Lo to sign best-selling collection

ANVIL Publishing and National Bookstore are hosting a series of book-signing sessions by entertainment editor and columnist Ricky Lo, whose latest release, "Conversations with Ricky Lo," has now attained bestseller status.

The sessions are open to the public: March 15, 3 p.m., National Bookstore, SM Manila; March 16, 3 p.m., National Bookstore Quezon Avenue; March 17, 3 p.m., National Bookstore Glorietta.

A special 10-percent discount will be given to purchases of the book made on those days. Rare photographs of the well-attended book launch will also be given away to lucky buyers.

The 42 pieces in the book bear Lo's trademark intelligent and intuitive style of interviewing. He considers the interviews in the book as "groundbreaking pieces in which the stars interviewed reveal for the first time hitherto 'hidden' facets and/or tightly guarded 'secrets' of their lives."

Included in the collection are conversations with the late Charito Solis, Pops Fernandez, Martin Nievera, Eddie Garcia, Susan Roces, FPJ, Dolphy, Zsa Zsa Padilla, Rustom Padilla, Carmina Villaroel, Gretchen Barretto, Gina Alajar, Hilda Coronel, Sharon Cuneta, Cesar Montano, Robin Padilla, Rosanna Roces, Anjanette Abayari, Monique Wilson, Richard and Lucy Gomez, Lea Salonga, Gloria Romero, Phillip Salvador, Dina Bonnevie, Jacklyn Jose, Gloria Diaz.

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UP writing fellows named

LIKHAAN: The UP Creative Writing Center has awarded 20 fellowships to the 40th UP National Writers' workshop from April 1-14 at the Hotel Veneracion (the former Hotel Salome), Baguio City. The workshop theme is "Ang Manunulat Bilang Manggagawa."

The fellows are: Adam Julian A. David, Faye V. Ilogon, Anna Felicia C. Sanchez and Rachelle Tesoro (fiction in English); Jeffery M. Espiritu, Ricardo P. Fernando, Vladimeir B. Gonzales and Marlon M. Villegas (fiction in Filipino); Ime Aznar, Jeneen R. Garcia, Francis L. Martinez and Rodrigo V. de la Pena Jr. (poetry in English); Reagan R. Maiquez, Beverly W. Sly and Joseph Rosmon M. Manrique (poetry in Bikol); and Amibell B. Corpuz (fiction in Iluko) and Ariel S. Tabag (poetry in Iluko).

The Baguio Workshop will be directed by the much-awarded fictionist and poet Ariel S. Agcaoili. Members of the teaching panel are the CWC associates, all distinguished writers and professors at the UP: Gemino H. Abad, Virgilio S. Almario, Jose Y. Dalisay Jr., J. Neil C. Garcia, Cristina Pantoja-Hidalgo (UP Creative Writing Center director), Anton M. Juan Jr., Domingo G. Landicho, Victor E.C. Nadera, Jun Cruz Reyes and Lilia Quindoza Santiago.

CWC resident fellows Jose F. Lacaba, Marra PL. Lanot, Charlson L. Ong, Carla M. Pacis and Rene O. Villanueva will also be part of the teaching panel, as will CWC advisers Amelia Lapeña-Bonifacio and Bienvenido L. Lumbera.

The writing fellows should call Tony Serrano at 922-1830 or workshop coordinator Ralph S. Galan at (0917) 411-0854 to confirm attendance and receive instructions.

Dating etiquette for young people now out

HOT off the press, and for the price of a "cheap" date, young adults who are in the dating stage will want to read "Manners for Dating," a simple manual of dos and don'ts and everything in between.

Authored by Penny Daza Tuviera, "Manners for Dating" is a book for teens, twenty- and thirtysomethings who have never dated but want to, who have been traumatized by a bad date and wish to get over the experience, or who simply want to compare notes with how the rest of the world does it.

"It's for instruction and entertainment, it's for fun and connecting with the dating generation," says Tuviera. She was a staff writer of Metro magazine until she moved out to Los Angeles, California. She is a daughter of journalist and TV host Jullie Y. Daza. "Manners for Dating" is exclusively available at National Bookstore.

Dumaguete writers' workshop sets new deadline

NATIONAL Artist for Literature Edith L. Tiempo, director of the National Writers' Workshop, announced recently that applications for fellowships this summer will still be entertained until the new deadline of March 31.

The longest-running writers workshop in Asia, now on its 41st edition, will be held from May 6-24 at the CAP Building, Dumaguete City.

Applicants are enjoined to submit their manuscripts in English, a brief curriculum vitae and a photograph to Dr. Edith L. Tiempo, c/o CAP Building, Rizal Boulevard, Dumaguete City.

The manuscripts should be composed of either a minimum of eight poems or a minimum of two short stories, or any combination thereof. Apart from the hardcopy, a diskette containing the works would be appreciated.

Assisting Dr. Tiempo this summer will be resident panelists Cesar Ruiz Aquino, Bobby Villasis and Ernesto Superal Yee, while the guest panelists will include Gemino H. Abad, Cirilo F. Bautista, Ophelia A. Dimalanta, Alfred A. Yuson, Marjorie Evasco, Susan Lara, Anthony Tan and Danny Reyes.

Last call to UST writers' workshop

THE UST Center for Creative Writing and Studies is making a last call for applications for fellowships to the third UST National Writers' Workshop on April 24-29 in Baguio City. Deadline is March 15.

The workshop will focus on poetry, fiction and drama. It is open to budding writers who have not been awarded fellowships to any of the major national writers workshop (i.e. Dumaguete, UP, Iligan). An applicant should submit a hard copy of his/her manuscript and a virus-free diskette copy (MS Word 6.0 or 7.0) containing at least five poems and/or two short stories, and/or two short plays (or a full-length drama), a résumé and 2x2 ID photo. The applicant should also submit a certification duly signed by the head or any credible authority of a respected institution (school, office, parish church, etc.) that the articles being submitted are original. There are 15 fellowships available.

Call Ferdie Lopez, Eric Melendez or Alma Manguilin at 731-3101 local 8281.

Free seminars on career guidance

POWERBOOKS Specialty Store brings its customers a special treat this March with a series of free talks on careers titled "The Real Life Guide to Careers 2002."

For working professionals, learn the answers to the many questions and problems that plague your work life, from promotions and raises to what to do when you switch jobs, on March 13, 6-8 p.m., at PowerBooks Makati. Prof. Benjamin Sandoval, director of the University of the Philippines MBA Program and founder and director of Mecromark Inc., will survey workplace dilemmas in "Answers to Work Life Questions."

Tired of working for others? Want to start your own business? PowerBooks and Entrepreneur Magazine bring you "Be Your Own Boss! Entrepreneurship as an Alternative" on March 20, 6-8 p.m., at PowerBooks Arnaiz, with Butz Bartolome, president of GMB Franchise Developers, as speaker.

Free early bird gifts for the first 20 registrants and special raffle prizes will be given away during the talks. Registration will start at 5:30 p.m. on March 13 and March 20 at the branch Customer Service desk. Call 844-4455, 635-2898 to 99 or e-mail ibid@powerbooks.com.ph.

Ateneo student artists recognized

ATENEO'S Dean of the School of Humanities, Dr. Leovino Ma. Garcia, will honor the outstanding college seniors who have made a definite contribution in the arts during the 9th Dean's Awards for the Arts on March 13.

The yearly Dean's Awards for the Arts seek to recognize the artistry of graduating college seniors as expressed in the style and vision of their output and achievements. The recipients are Christopher Franz a. Carandang (music), Bernard de Jesus Dacanay (screen arts), Cesar Miguel G. Escaño (creative writing, fiction), Jayson P. Jacobo, (creative writing, poetry), Yolando B. Jamendang Jr. (creative writing, poetry), Ma. Trinka Erika Lat (screen arts), Sanrio P. de Leon (photography), Missy M. Maramara (theater arts), Ana Cristina B. Pastelero (graphic design), Edgar C. Samar (creative writing, poetry), Ana Karylle P. Tatlonghari (music), Jason C. Vitorillo (theater arts) and Yavanna S. Valdellon (creative writing, poetry).

The recipients were chosen by a committee composed of Dr. Ricardo Abad, Dr. Ma. Christina Astorga, Dr. Rofel Brion, Eduardo Jose Calasanz, Antonio G. Lambino, Ramon Enrico Lerma, Francis Ted Limpoco, Frances Ng, Renan Prado, Danton Remoto, Dr. Benilda Santos and Dr. Fernando Zialcita.

The awards ceremony will be at 4:45 p.m. at the Escaler Hall, Science Education Complex, Ateneo campus, Loyola Heights, QC.

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* Promo runs until December 31, 2002
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0464, Series of 2002.

RP dotcom chief says he quit, was not fired

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva
INQ7.net

FORMER INTERDOTNET Philippines Inc. head Fernando Contreras Jr. said he resigned and was not booted out from the Makati-based Internet service provider.

"It was not a hostile takeover. It was really an agreement between all the parties involved," Contreras said in an interview with INQ7.net Friday.

The Interdotnet Philippines executive said that there were negotiations happening between him and officials of the mother company Inter.net for "a couple of months."

Interdotnet Philippines is a subsidiary of Inter.net, a global Internet service provider with headquarters in the United States.

"It was due to disagreements over principles between me and my principal partners in the US," Contreras said, stressing that company "politics" had nothing to do with it.

"So my reasons for leaving was purely a business decision," Contreras said.

More than 20 employees, including top executives of the local subsidiary, have resigned after Contreras left, a source said.

Miguel Paraz, former senior vice president for engineering, confirmed that other members of the management team, including himself, have left Interdotnet Philippines.

"Yes I left but I did not resign. Technically, I'm still an employee but I left because they already had someone to replace me," Paraz said in a separate interview. "I'm part of (Contreras') team. So I feel I cannot comfortably work with the new team," said Paraz, explaining his reasons for leaving.

Other members of the former management team who left include Gary Mensenares, senior vice president for operations; Tim Samson, senior vice president for business development and marketing; and Raul Calalang, senior vice president for sales, Paraz said.

Paraz noted that only Roberto Buktaw, the senior vice president for finance, stayed behind.

Ting Yupangco, the former chief of local ISP I-NeXT Internet, is now head of Interdotnet Philippines, said Robin Llamas, vice president for business development and marketing, in a separate telephone interview.

The official, however, declined to comment on the exodus of top executives in the company.

Instead, INQ7.net was referred to its PR firm Strategic Edge.

Strategic Edge head Ana Gonzales said officials of Interdotnet could not give any comments on the issue because the company was focusing on "fixing up systems and preparing for the roll out of new products and services."

"The preparations are for the improvement and enhancement of the company," Gonzales said.

A check at Interdotnet Philippines' website at ph.inter.net showed that the page for the local management team was empty.

Yupangco was head of I-NeXT Internet when it bought into iPhil Communications (the company which Contreras belonged to) to form PSINet Philippines.

Interdotnet Philippines was created when PSINet, a global Internet service provider, consolidated all its Internet service provider businesses in April 2000.

From July 1, 2000 until March 1, 2001, Interdotnet had been self-funded with no reliance on then-owner PSINet.

PSINet later filed for Chapter 11, or protection from creditors in the event of bankruptcy.

Meanwhile, Contreras said that he is contemplating setting up a new business dealing with the convergence of wireless and Internet technology. He said Paraz will join him in the venture.

Dead or Alive 3

The sexiest fighting game alive

Leon, an Italian mercenary who likes pizza and gardening, pummels Jann Lee to the ground. Lee is a 20-year-old bouncer and Jeet Kune Do master who loves hamburgers

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

I USED to be a Tekken fanatic until I saw Dead or Alive 3 (DOA3), the latest version of the fighting game developed by Japanese gamemaker Tecmo Ltd.

Yes, like the moment I saw Compaq's iPAQ, I was immediately convinced that Microsoft had this uncanny way of attracting the best talents (the company has secured the exclusive rights to bring this game into their Xbox gaming console).

DOA3 is perhaps the most advanced arcade-born fighting game developed for the Xbox. Apart from the visual treat and the interesting characters (read: sexy), it sets the standard for the next generation of fighting games.

Several things about DOA3 caught my fancy. Let's begin with the graphics.

To my mind, no other game has focused so much on graphics details. Glass shatters when a player is smashed into it. Water ripples as players duel by the beach. Characters leave footprints on the snow. A falling coconut hurts a player.

The rendering of graphics in the 16 different arenas of DOA3 not only demonstrates the power of the Xbox but also showcases the experience of Tecmo in ensuring this game will haunt you in your dreams. Characters are designed meticulously. Their eyes, hair and the clothes look almost real. My favorites include Jan Lee (the Bruce Lee look-alike), Hayabusa, Kasumi and Zack, the American self-taught Muai Thai expert who is just in it for the money.

DOA 2 was available in Dreamcast, but reviewers say that graphics for DOA3 is "absolutely stunning," labeling it as the "best-looking home fighting game ever released."

It also "looks better than anything in the arcades, with the possible exception of Virtua Fighter 4," another game reviewer noted.

Admittedly, graphics alone does not make a game interesting, and DOA3 is a good example of this. Once I stopped admiring the forest, the snow caverns and the mountains, I realized that the game does not offer much of anything that hasn't been done in other three-dimensional fighting games, particularly its own predecessors.

Just like PlayStation 2's Tekken Tag Tournament, or Dreamcast's Soul Calibur, or even the original PlayStation's Battle Arena Toshinden, DOA3 plays like last year's DOA2.

It has the same characters as the previous game. The moves and combos, including the kicks, punches, dodges, counterattacks, throws and holds, are almost identical. But this is because DOA2 is already a well-refined game. So what else do its developers need to add? Nothing much more except more "realism."

THRILL-O-METER
Dead or Alive 3

- Gameplay—a mixture of the storyline, the creativity and fun factor of the game
- Playability—is the game difficult to control and are there portions of it that don't make sense?
- Video—a mixture of the graphics, rendering, animated movements, cutaway scenes and movies found in the game
- Audio—the background music, voice characterization, sound effects and how they enhance the mood of the game
- Replay value—is this a game you can and would want to play over and over again?
- Ooomph—that certain X-factor which makes you wanna own the game

8.8 TOTAL

DOA3 adheres to "Newton's three natural laws" because it has a physics engine. The characters are not mere animations, but are like puppets that move according to your will (or fingers).

I must admit that I play DOA3 to get myself warmed up for other games. However, unlike role-playing games like Halo (another Xbox exclusive), DOA3 becomes predictable once you master the moves and the combos.

Make no mistake about it, though: DOA3 is fun to play, particularly the tag team tournaments and the multipleplayer (up to four players). My editor once got tired of playing this game, until I introduced him to tag team play.

As a former Tekken fan, I noticed that DOA3 "borrowed" some of the "over-the-top" fighting moves and Virtua Fighter's detailed rendering of graphics. DOA3, however, surpasses these two games with its neat counterattacks (that is achieved by pressing the "free" and "punch" buttons simultaneously). This reversal unleashes more damaging punches or kicks, or even throws that I have not seen in other games.

DEAD/ F3

Life goes on after DOA3

By Leo Magno

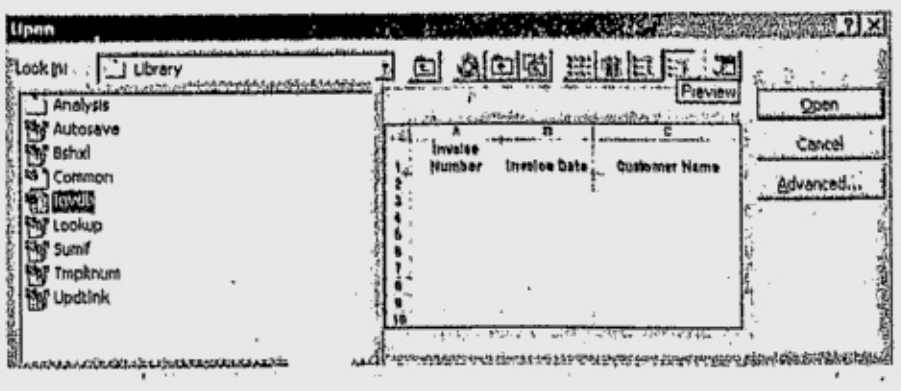
DEAD or Alive 3 (DOA3) is one of the first three Xbox games I bought, and I must admit I was hooked on it.

The graphics and physics of the game were stunning—each detail was rendered superbly, the movements of the fighters were physically correct, down to the wonderful, jiggling motion of the mass of mammary muscles on the female fighters' chests. The CG movies were even more stunning, with the female fighters showing more flesh (one was taking a shower completely naked with her back toward the camera, another was swimming with dolphins at sea, giving a totally different meaning to the word "breaststroke"). However, like all arcade-type fighter games, DOA3 tends to get boring. Although it obviously has good replay value, DOA3 players could eventually get tired beating each other up.

Still, this game is one of the most visually stunning we've seen so far, especially when com-

LIFE/ F3

At right is Christie, an assassin with 37-inch breasts. At left is T'ai Chi Quan expert Leifang throwing female wrestler Tina Armstrong to the ground. Below is a screenshot of the ninja known as Hayate not showing respect to 65-year-old Gen Fu, the Xynyi Liuhe Quan master



Previewing the content of your Excel Workbook

By Jerry Liao

YOU can preview the content of your Excel workbook before opening it. Here's how:

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For more tips, visit http://www.brainshare.com.ph. For comments and questions, send e-mail to infochat@mozcom.com.

Look beyond chip speed, AMD says

By Joel D. Pinaroc
INQ7.net

IT is not speed that solely measures or determines the performance of a personal computer (PC). Consumers should look into other factors when investing on new PC systems either for home or office use.

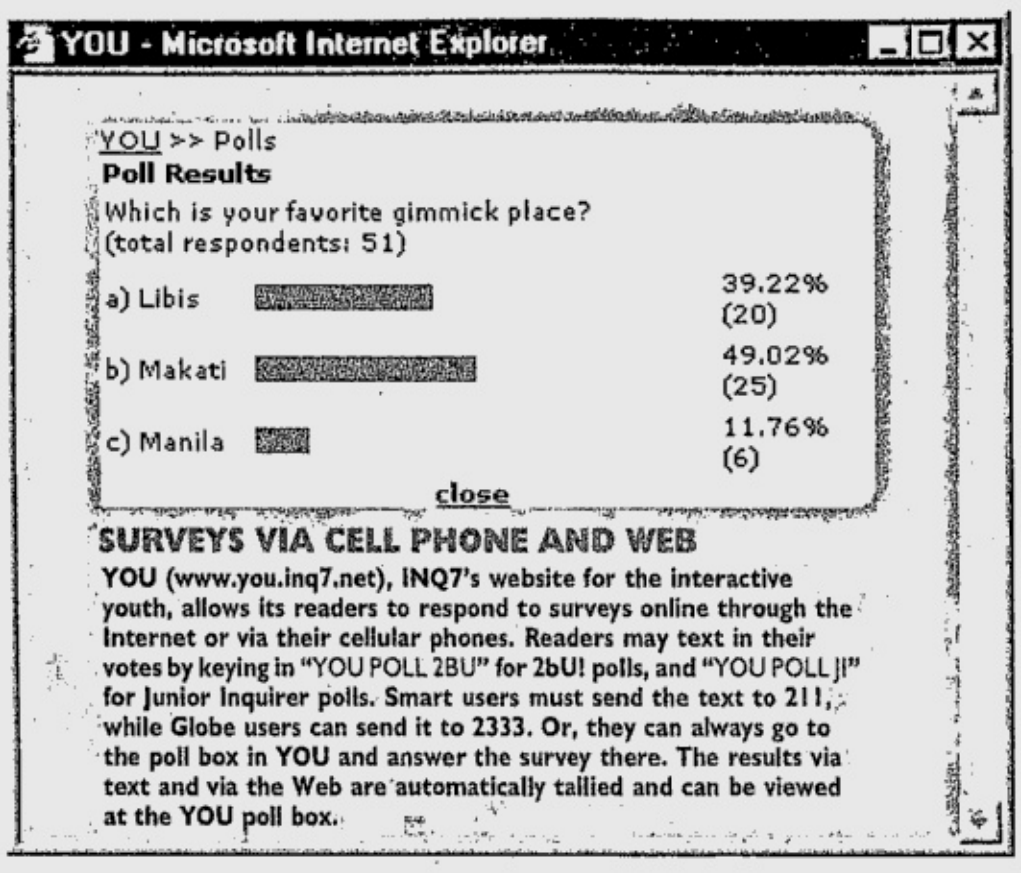
This is the message Advanced Micro Devices (AMD), the closest market rival of Intel Corp. in the microprocessor market, seems to be saying, following an announcement by AMD that it will no longer brand its upcoming products with the ever-present clock frequency tag (usually expressed as megahertz or gigahertz in the case of newer chips).

For instance, instead of having a product that will compete with say, an Intel chip of the same class, AMD will say its Athlon 2000+ will "outperform" the Intel Pentium 4.2 GHz chip.

Although Intel holds a majority of the chip market, it has always been engaged in a fierce microprocessor speed war with AMD. It was AMD who first got one over Intel, being the first to launch the gigahertz (GHz) chip, months before Intel unveiled its own. In the second round of the two companies' speed battle, Intel upped the ante by being the first to launch the 2-GHz chip, months ahead of AMD.

According to Wee Yep Yin, marketing manager at AMD Far East, the company will veer away from utilizing the

LOOK/ F4



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Gadgets and Gizmos also showcases the latest video game consoles, personal digital assistants and mobile phones.

Dead or Alive 3: The sexiest . . .

From page F2

During the tag team plays, you also get to have both characters throw or grab an opponent.

The environments can also be used as a "weapon" to defeat your opponents. Send an enemy flying into a glass window, and see it shatter and watch the character fall to his or her death. Also, the whole fighting arena is interactive, meaning a character can fall off a cliff, slam into an obstacle (a block of stone or ice) or even be hit by a coconut on the head, which result to a deduction in health.

And did I mention that the lady characters in DOA3 are exceptionally well-endowed? Similar to what I've heard from Lara Croft fans, I've seen several postings in DOA3 forums asking developers to find a way to reveal some more skin. By the way, this game is PG-13. Therefore the femme fatales in the game are not really objectionable but rather look like the sexy animé characters in "Sailormoon."

But the female fighters are not the only appealing features of this game. Like other fighting games, DOA3 also has a story behind it.

Ryu Hayabusa, a superninja, has been tasked to stop the evil Tengu Bankotsu-bo. But the superninja was too late because the evil one had already sparked a massive wave of destruction leading to worldwide chaos.

Earth is therefore covered with dense clouds as a result of the destruction, shrouding the planet with darkness and fear. DOATEC has turned Earth into an arena, a hunting ground for scam-artists.

DOATEC's Development Department—the a high-tech military facility—through Dr. Victor Donovan, develops a superhuman, known as Genra. Genra was once the leader of the Hajin Mon Ninja. But now he has been transformed into a force, which the characters of DOA3 will eventually have to battle in a slaughterhouse of the Omega superhuman, a realm which has come to be known as the World Combat Championship DOA3.

There are various choices of game play mode in DOA3. Apart from the tag team game, it also has a survivor mode where you have to battle different opponents until you get to Omega's superhuman project: Genra. A team battle mode is also available where you must defeat all the characters in your opponent's line-up. It also has a sparring mode that shows novice players the ropes.

There are 16 characters in this game, including Zack, the African-American who is a self-taught Muai Thai champion who entered the tournament for money. There is also Hitomi, an unassuming girl who happens to be a karate master and student of Jann Lee. Then there is Christie, a busty assassin with silvery, feathery hair. There's Brad Wong, the drunken master. And Bayman, the Russian martial arts expert who is known for his holds and powerful punches and kicks.

The game's controls are easy to master but need getting used to. One button is for punching, one for kicks, and one for blocking or grabbing. A combination of these buttons with the directional keypad creates various moves and combos.

All in all, Dead or Alive 3 is an exciting, and "tense" game that keeps me seated for hours. I would always have it in my collection of games, although I have yet to buy my own Xbox.

Meet the femme fatales of DOA3

	Vital stats	Likes	Hobbies
Kasumi	35-21-33	Strawberry	Fortune telling
Hitomi	35-23-33	Sachertorte	Cooking
Tina	37-24-35	Seafood	Video games
Leifang	34-22-34	Chinese dessert	Aroma therapy
Christie	37-23-35	Tomato juice	Driving
Helena	35-22-34	Blanc Manger	Walking
Ayane	37-21-33	Marrons glaces	Beauty treatment

Life goes on after DOA3 . . .

From page F2

pared to its predecessor. I've played DOA2 on the Dreamcast, and, needless to say, the older version doesn't hold a candle to this new one.

However, after having played 14 Xbox games so far, I realized that, yes, Virginia, there is life after DOA3.

This is what I've always told my fellow former pugilists (ex-boxers or Xboxers, get it?) like our very own Erwin Oliva and Joel Pinaroc, Infotech's Powertips guy and "Infochat" host Jerry Liao, Noel Mailum of the Manila Standard and Alex Villafania of the Metropolitan Computer Times, who I gather every now and then to play Xbox at home. Although the stunning graphics of DOA3 showcases what the raw power of the Xbox can do, other games which utilize more robust game engines and artifical intelligence programs make this machine shine even more. So, instead of getting hooked on DOA3 resulting in some hurt feelings during trash talking sessions, I advise my fellow Xboxers to take it easy and take a look at the other games.

That said, let's meet at home again and try our hand on "WWF: Raw." This one has better gameplay than DOA3 with equally stunning graphics. What do you say, guys? I have a fake WWF belt waiting at home for anyone who can beat me using Triple H.

I'm not kidding.

On a related note, word has it that tens of thousands of Japanese Xbox users are complaining that Microsoft's console scratches DVD games and audio CDs. This brings to mind one of my games which showed scratches on it despite the care I give it. I thought it was because one of my Xboxers made the mistake of laying the disc on the table and not on the keep case. But now I'm beginning to have doubts.

Also, my latest game just suddenly hangs after only a few minutes of play. The console merely says "Make sure the disc is an Xbox disc." It might as well have washed its hands like Pontius Pilate. That was a brand new disc (New Legends), for crying out loud. I have also experienced hang times with Silent Hill 2, Oddworld, NBA Live 2002 and Azurik.

Is it a chronic illness of Microsoft products to hang?

Anyway, life goes on, new games are bought, more money is spent and more frustration is faced after a freaking, expensive game hangs. And yes, there is life after DOA3.

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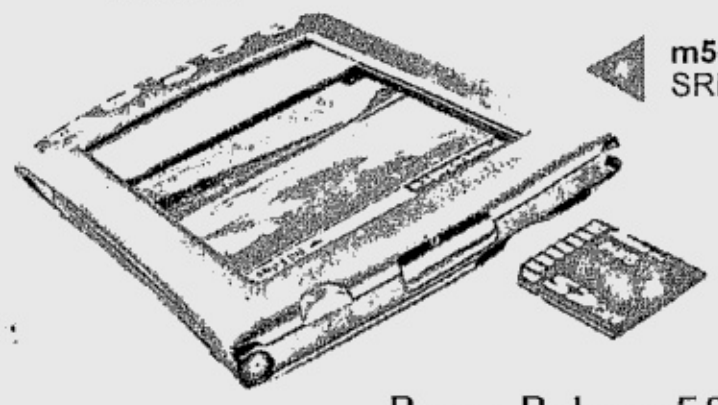

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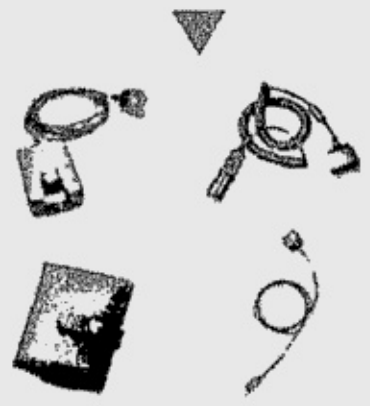

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Call center rings up RP

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

WATCHING all those television series like "Friends" and mimicking the accents of Joey, Chandler, Phoebe, Ross, Monica and Rachel do some good after all. Like totally.

This is because Filipinos have become the natural hunting ground for customer call centers of American companies, more so than the Indians who use British English and the Irish who have their own brand of English.

Sam Chandoha, chief executive officer of Source1 Customer Contact Centers says it's a challenge to convince American companies to transfer their call center operations from the United States to the Philippines, but once they try it out, they get hooked.

"We came a year ago and some were hesitant to do business here but we convinced them to at least listen to how the Filipinos do it. When they visited the call center they saw that Filipinos were smiling, they showed enthusiasm, they were charming and helpful," Chandoha adds.

Source One Communications is one of the largest contact center solutions providers in the United States, which has centers in New Jersey, Manhattan, Toronto, London, Australia and Johannesburg.

Call centers in the United States may eventually be phased out as American firms are hard pressed to look for less costly alternatives to maintaining a customer call center as costs of keeping an American workforce is going up even as the quality of service is going down.

This resulted in the growth of the call center business in Asia Pacific estimated to reach over $4 billion in 2005 from $1.2 billion in 2000. The Philippines is expected to experience one of the largest growth rates in the region due to the country's affinity with things American.

It also helps that the Philippines naturally uses American English (as opposed to British) and is the third largest English-speaking country in the world. The Filipinos' natural ability with languages makes it virtually impossible for an American customer to tell the difference between a Filipino and an American.

Source1 came to the Philippines last year and partnered with Customer Contact Center Inc., a member of the Lopez group of companies. The joint-venture company has 150 seats in operation at the state-of-the-art center in Eastwood CyberPark in Libis currently serving customer calls for Black and Decker, Sony electronics for its universal remote control and soon the perfume line of Calvin Klein.

Strong growth seen in online retail sector

By Joey G. Alarilla

THOUGH many retailers saw business suffer in 2001 due to the economic slowdown, the tech slump and the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, online retail sprung a pleasant surprise last year with its steady growth.

Bucking concerns that the tragic events of Sept. 11 would cause holiday shopping to suffer, more households in the United States bought products online.

About 18.7 million US households turned to online shopping in December, compared to 16. 8 million in November, according to the results of the Forrester Online Retail Index. The monthly index is based on a survey conducted by Forrester Research together with Greenfield Online. According to the index, total online retail sales in the United States for 2001 reached $47. 6 billion, compared to $42.4 billion in 2000.

In its analysis of the prospects for sales over the Internet, Forrester Research said "the Net will become a welcome tool for online consumers looking for a deal." The research firm stated that the economic downturn would turn more consumers into bargain hunters, citing survey results showing that 65 percent of Europeans who buy online are concerned about the cost of products.

"More consumers will use the Web to find the best deal and will then go to a click-and-mortar store to buy it," Forrester said.

In the Philippines, retailers are also complementing their physical outlets with virtual storefronts. While virtual stores are not intended to replace real-world outlets, they offer Filipino shoppers the convenience of viewing and comparing products without having to leave their homes. Virtual storefronts also help boost sales not only by advertising products, but also by allowing consumers to purchase goods and services online.

As more Philippine companies seek innovative ways of marketing their products and services over the Internet, INQ7 Interactive Inc. launched an expanded e-commerce service called Marketplace on March 1. INQ7 is the joint-venture online company of the Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc. and GMA Network Inc.

Marketplace, which is prominently featured on the INQ7.net homepage at www.inq7.net, is the umbrella site for INQ7's iShopping e-commerce services and JobMarket Online.

The expanded iShopping service provides greater flexibility for "e-lessees" or strategic partners that will set up their virtual storefronts, said INQ7 business development officer Sheryll Ang.

Ang pointed out that the virtual marketplace offers greater flexibility compared to traditional online banner ads.

"E-lessees can choose which products to highlight, showcasing a different one as needed. So INQ7 readers can easily refer back to their favorite online *suki*. This gives our INQ7 readers gift ideas for shopping convenience," Ang said.

For instance, this week, e-lessees myAyala.com and Filgifts.com are using Marketplace to showcase products targeted at graduates. MyAyala.com is highlighting fresh tulip bouquets imported from Holland as the perfect gift for graduates, while Filgifts.com is encouraging graduates to celebrate the occasion with a double chocolate treat.

Ang pointed out that online storefronts work in tandem with physical stores to encourage more Filipinos to buy from the local market. Instead of looking for foreign e-commerce sites, INQ7 readers can enjoy the convenience of browsing and shopping online while getting their daily fix of the news.

"Some people hold on to the idea that these online malls solely cater to those living abroad. However, results will show that we've been generating sales not only from those abroad who ship products to themselves or to their loved ones in the Philippines, but also from the local market," Ang explained.

In the end, the Net will continue to be an important tool in helping people find the right information—and the best bargain in these challenging times.

Look beyond . . .

From page F3

clock frequency tag since a chip's performance is determined more by the amount of work done by the processor in each clock cycle. A clock cycle is the number of instructions per clock (IPC) a processor can process.

AMD says chip manufacturers initially used the clock speed as the sole factor for performance, such that manufacturers have since then engaged in a speed battle to determine who can produce the fastest chip, without much emphasis on the IPC.

According to Yin, the performance is now no longer solely determined by clock frequency as the IPC will now play a prominent role in performance gauging.

AMD is also claiming that this is where their processors and Intel's are different, since the two companies have taken different directions—in terms of technology and microprocessor design—in factoring in IPC.

Yin explained that the IPC of chips coming from AMD and Intel are different. This difference could spell the difference in the performance levels of competing microprocessors that do not have the same clock frequencies.

Yin is saying that a 2-Ghz chip may have a faster clock frequency than a 1.8-Ghz chip, in terms of performance and the IPC in consideration, although the 1.8-GHz chip could outperform its 2-GHz rival for certain software applications.

In the cash-strapped economy however, chipmakers may have to do more than showcase their respective technologies, since the recovery of the global economy as a whole and the revival of information technology specifically, are yet to be determined.

In the Philippines for instance, executives of AMD's business partner Asiantech Corp., a local IT distribution firm, have noted a general slowdown in the uptake of products specifically the purchase of processors.

"There is still a slowdown, although hopefully, a recovery will soon happen," said Sonny Sy, product and technology manager of Asiantech.

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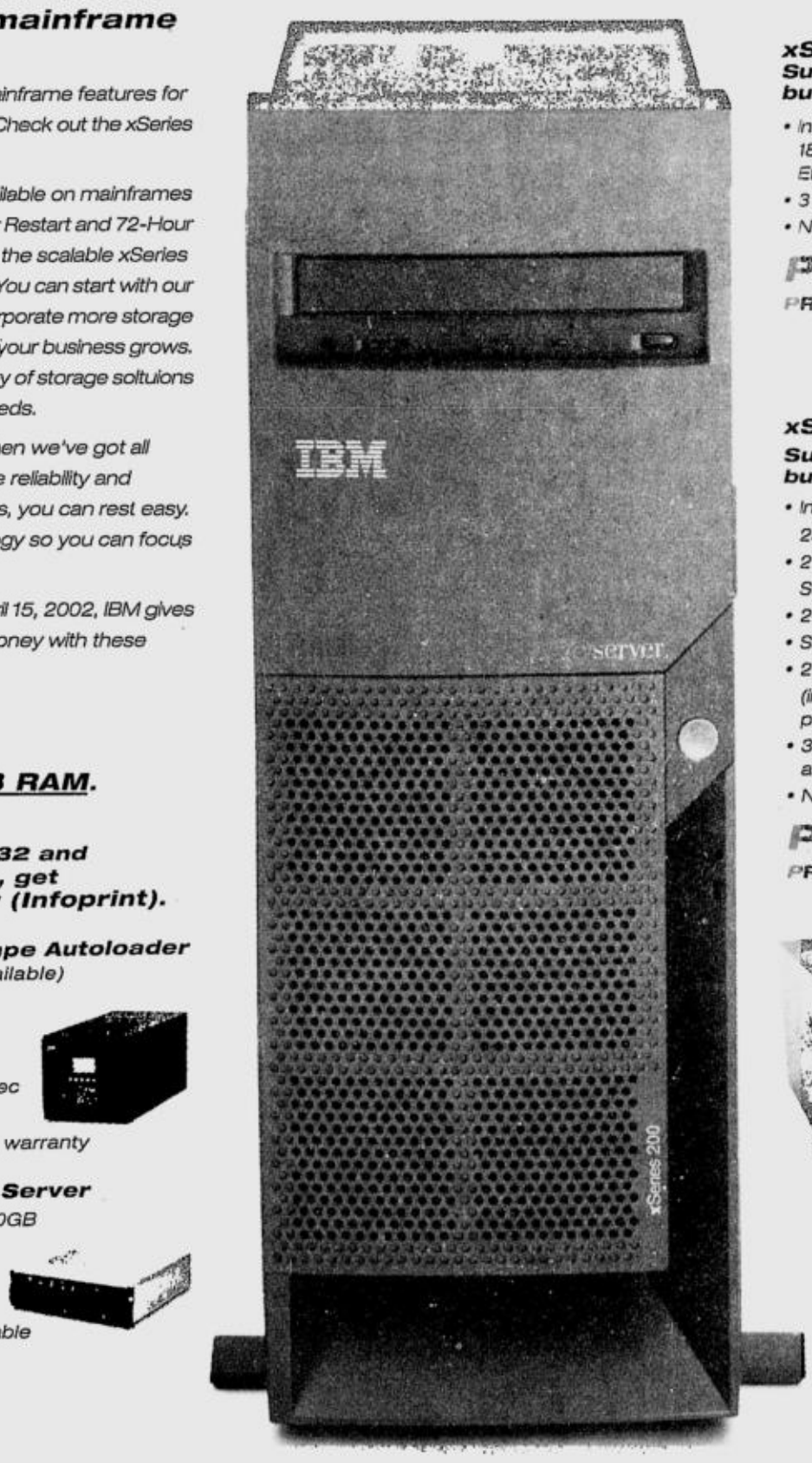

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BPI Card

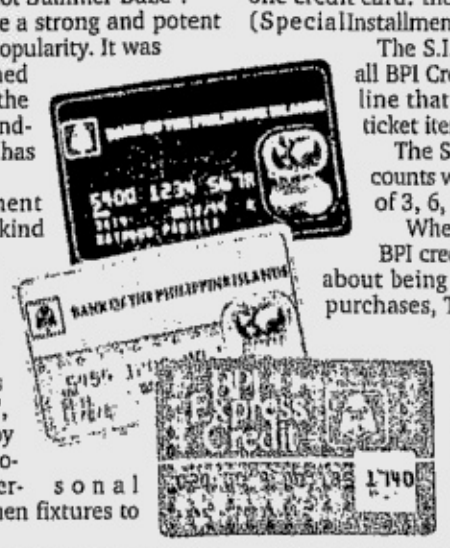
Aggie Pinili, Account Manager

Aries Espinosa, Editor

The leader in installment financing holds 27th Madness

BPI Card, the undisputed leader in consumer financing, is once again adding a dash of cool to Glorietta, Ayala Center, Makati from March 6 to 24 as it holds its 27th Installment Madness dubbed "Hot Summer Daze".

BPI Card continues to capture a strong and potent market due to its ever-growing popularity. It was in 1994 when BPI Card launched the first Appliance Madness at the Glorietta and since then, the landscape of shopping convenience has changed.



That's because the Installment Madness is the only one of its kind that offers the best deals including, among others, the zero-percent interest promo on high-ticket items by participating merchants.

At an Installment Madness event like "Hot Summer Daze", BPI credit cardholders get to enjoy everything from the latest audio-video equipment to the best personal computers, from the finest kitchen fixtures to the best home appliances.

The "Hot Summer Daze" Madness is happening simultaneously with the "Charge-All Promo", which allows cardholders to transfer and convert to S.I.P (Special Installment Plan) other credit card and cash transactions at stores within the Glorietta malls worth a minimum accumulated amount of P3,000.

With the BPI Credit Card, easy payment schemes, discounts and perks make shopping a pleasure. Using any of the three fully-charged-for-value BPI Credit Cards (BPI Express Credit, BPI Classic and Gold MasterCard) allows cardholders the unique advantage of enjoying the most innovative and special credit card features around.

Only the BPI Credit Cards carry two credit lines in one credit card: the regular credit line and the S.I.P. (SpecialInstallment Plan).

The S.I.P. is a unique feature exclusive to all BPI Credit Cards. It is an additional credit line that lets cardholders purchase high-ticket items on installment.

The S.I.P lets cardholders enjoy big discounts with low interest rates from a choice of 3, 6, 9,12, 18 or up to 24-month terms.

When BPI credit cardholders use their BPI credit card. They do not have to worry about being charged for hidden fees on their purchases, They are not surcharged for what they buy, whether at the Madness or on regular purchase.

And unlike other credit cards, the BPI Credit Cards compute the interest on purchase only on the statement date, and not on the posting date. This gives BPI credit cardholders the lowest finance computation in the industry.

The participating appliance manufacturers at the "Hot Summer Daze" Madness are Aiwa, American Home, Ariston, Concepcion-Carrier, Elba, Fedders, General Electric, Haier, JVC, Kolin, Konka, La Germania, LG Collins, Midea, National Panasonic, Philips, Pioneer, Sharp, Sony, and Whirlpool.

Ambiance One, Amity Sales, Blims, Edia, and Home Plus are bringing in the best furniture in town while Electroworld, Silicon Valley, The Computer Authority (TCA) are offering computers.

Other participating manufacturers are Canon, Casio, Globe Handyphone, Magnavision, Ricoh, Tefal, and Warner Home Video.

The participating dealers are Abenson's, Automatic Centre, Anson's, Ambassador, SM Appliance, Sogo, Waltermart, and Western Marketing.

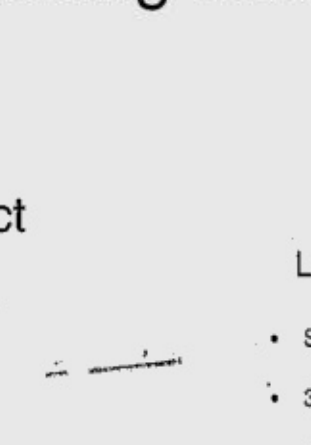
BPI Card is currently holding its year-long showcase called "SIPnotized" which "Hot Summer Daze" Installment Madness is a part of. Included in the lineup of "SIPnotized" are the recently-held Valentine Madness, the Travel Madness, Fitness Madness, the Special Installment Plan, The Frequent User Extension, the BPI Corporate Credit Card and the Petron-BPI MasterCard.

Summer fun is made of 'Hot Summer Daze'

WHILE SOME people agree that summer is best spent outdoors, there are others who think that the indoors are also welcome alternatives. Just ask those who are going to BPI Card's 27th Installment Madness dubbed "Hot Summer Daze", from March 6 to 24, at the Glorietta, Ayala Center, Makati City. The Madness is happening with the new "Charge-All Promo".

"Hot Summer Daze" is offering the widest selection of top-of-the-line audio-video equipment, from TV sets to DVD players, from CD components to MP3 players. Imagine enjoying all these in the comfort of a new airconditioner, bought at the Madness, of course. "Hot Summer Daze" should keep the homebodies happy throughout summer.

For those who prefer to hone their culinary skills this summer, "Hot Summer Daze" also carries the best kitchen appliances to suit everybody's taste. For the cyber-savvy, the Madness has a heady line-up of high-tech computers.



Those with other interests will also delight in the broad array of furniture, furnishings, and many others.

The participating appliance manufactures are: Aiwa, American Home, Ariston, Concepcion-Carrier, Elba, Fedders, General Electric, Haier and Midea, JVC, Kolin, Konka, La Germania, LG Collins, National/ Panasonic, Philips, Pioneer, Sharp, Sony, Whirlpool.

Furniture dealers are: Ambiance One, Amity Sales, Blims, Edia, and Home Plus. Computers come courtesy of Electroworld, Silicon Valley, The Computer Authority (TCA) and Villman.

Canon, Casio, Globe Handyphone, Magnavision, Ricoh, Tefal, and Warner Home Video are also participating to make that summer recreation more fun and exciting.

Participating dealers are Abenson's, Automatic Centre, Anson's, Ambassador, SM Appliance, Sogo, Waltermart and Western Marketing.

"Hot Summer Daze" is happening together with the new "Charge-All Promo". It lets cardholders transfer and convert to S.I.P. other credit card or cash transactions at stores within the Glorietta malls worth a minimum accumulated amount of P3,000.

Shopping with the BPI Credit Card at "Hot Summer Daze" is easy, convenient and fully packed with value. The BPI Credit is the only one of its kind that carries two credit lines in one credit card: the regular line and the S.I.P. (Special Installment Plan).

"Hot Summer Daze" is offering the lowest Special Installment Madness interest rates: as low as 1.69 percent per month for one full year, and 0-percent interest from three to 12 months on select items.

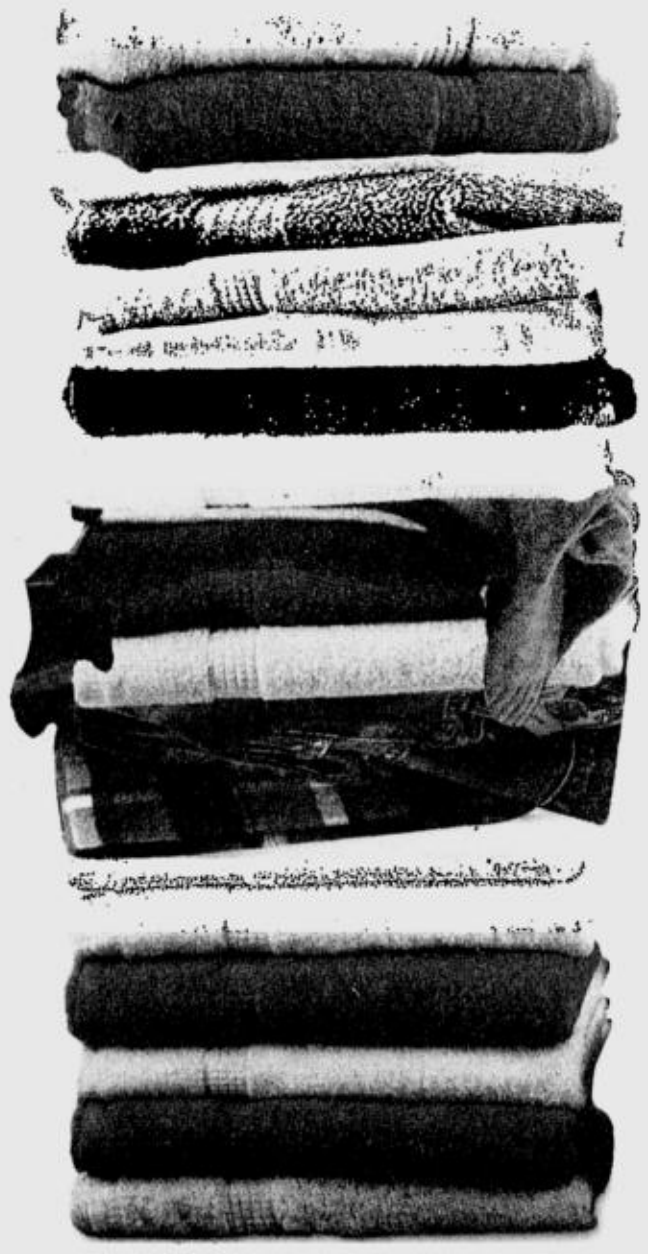
In addition, the cash price is the card price for all appliances on sale at the Madness. Cardholders also have the choice of terms from three to 24 easy month-terms. They also get to earn Frequent User Privilege points for monthly payments on their BPI Credit Card purchases.

It's going to be a fun and exciting summer, courtesy of the leader in installment financing, BPI Card.

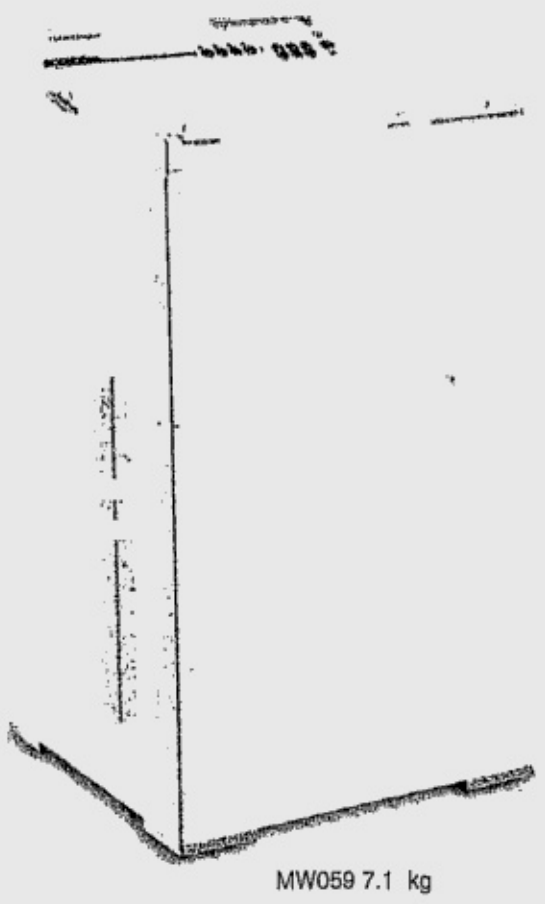
Fisher & Paykel

The World's Smartest Washing Machine now has

The biggest load

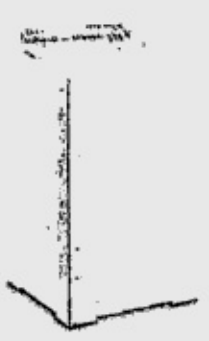


The most compact



Loaded Features:

- Smart Drive System (direct drive with adjustable motor speed)
- 3 Water levels
- Load Sensing (senses the amount of clothes in the bowl and power needed to drive it)
- 10 Agitator actions/ 3 Rinse options
- 4 Wash Cycles (Heavy Duty/Regular/Delicate/Wool)
- Spin Hold
- 5 year rust free warranty
- 3 Spin Speeds including 1000rpm spin cuts drying time by up to 30%
- Smart Programmable Temperature controls with 3 temperature options
- Soft Touch easy-to-clean controls
- Auto Lint Disposal/ Automatic Out-of-Balance correction
- Fabric Softener Dispenser
- Control Panel Indicator lights/ Programme safeguards
- Stainless Steel Bowl



Also available in 10.5 kg size

Recipient of the Mingay's Award for Best Laundry Product (1992, 93, 94, 95, 97, 98, 1999)

Winner of the ECNZ Rutherford Award for Environmental Impact 1992.

A Smart Drive's average wash load uses less energy than a 100 watt light bulb left for 1 hour.

Smart Drive Washers have been given the AAA rating by the Australasian Water Services Association.

www.fp.co.nz

For Info call tel. no. 564-15-21 Visit the Showroom at 5th Level Bridgeway, SM Megamall & Escolta cor. Nueva St., Manila

Fisher & Paykel
Premium Appliances from New Zealand

Shop your way with S.I.P.

AS THE VACATION season makes its presence felt, bargains and sale items spring in different malls and shopping centers to gives shoppers a break.

Think about having new swimming apparels for the seasonal swimming outings, or purchase that powerful 2-horsepower air-conditioner to cool off the summer heat. Picture yourself taking photos with that digital camera or simply watch your favorite VCD films with your new personal CD/VCD player during the weekends.

Good thing is BPI credit cardholders are given the opportunity to shop conveniently in bargains, malls and appliance stores all year long.

With BPI Credit Card's Special Installment plan (S.I.P.) BPI credit cardholders are allowed to purchase items via deferred payment scheme.

Wherever BPI credit cards are accepted, items such as clothes, shoes, novelty items, or electronics can be bought on installment provided the minimum accumulated purchase reaches P3,000.

Worth mentioning is that S.I.P. is great to use for purchasing high-ticket items like computers, audio-video items and furnishings. BPI credit cardholders are given the opportunity to enjoy big discounts with low interest rate from three, six, nine, 12, 18 or 24 monthly installment payments.

Since the BPI credit card is automated, merchants only need to swipe the credit card in their respective BPI credit card terminals to instantly obtain approval of purchase.

The 27th Installment Madness dubbed as the "Hot Summer Daze" highlights the Special Installment Plan offered by BPI Cards.

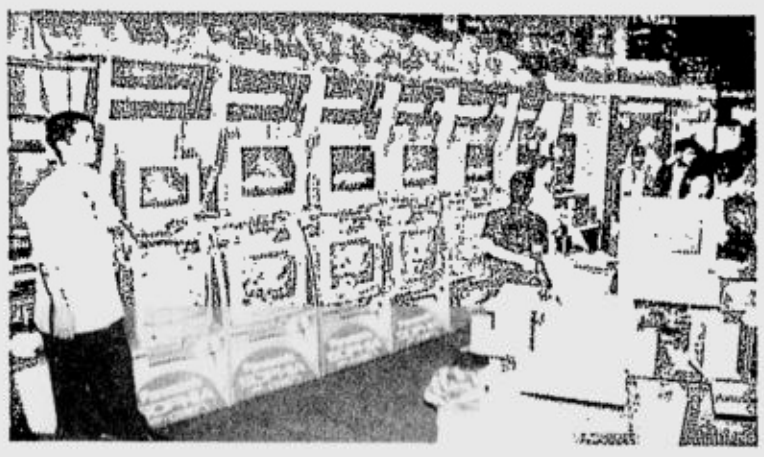
The "Hot Summer Daze" kicked off March 6 and runs until March 24 at the Glorietta, Activity Area, Ayala Center, Makati City.

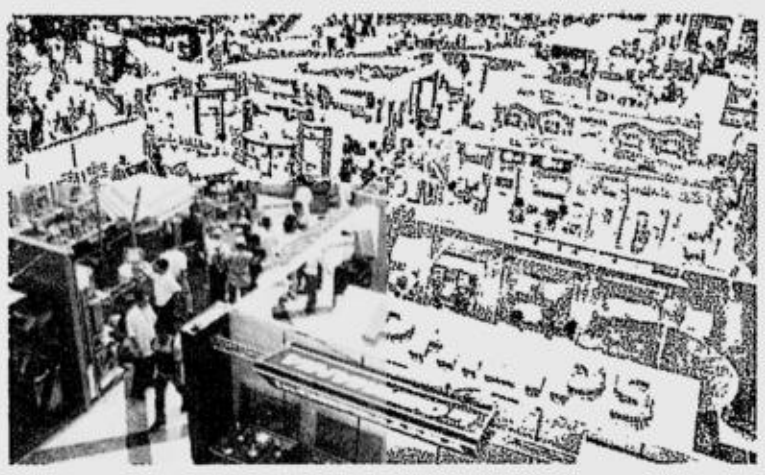
Check-out insanely high-quality items up for sale all under one roof. Top-of-the-line appliances are offered by Aiwa, American Home, Ariston, Concepcion-Carrier, Elba, Fedders, General Electric, Haier, JVC, Kolin, Konka, La Germania, LG Collins, Midea, National, Panasonic, Philips, Pioneer, Sharp, Sony, Whirlpool, Canon, Casio, Globe Handyphone, Magnavision, Ricoh, Tefal, and Warner Home Video.

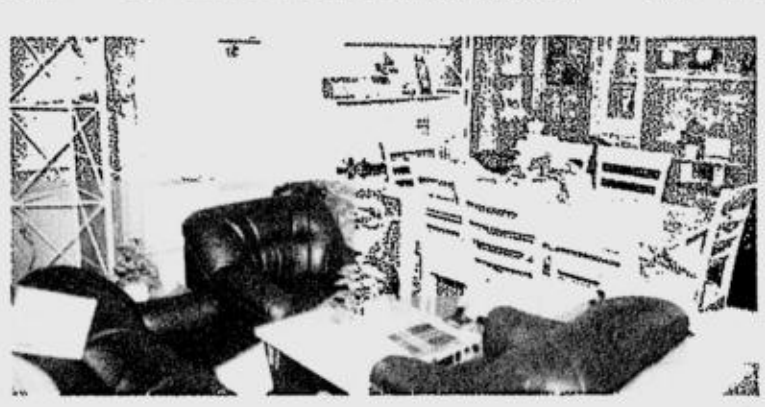
Participating furniture and computer merchants are: Ambiance One, Amity Sales, Blims, Edia, Home Plus, Electroworld, Silicon Valley, The Computer Authority (TCA) and Villman.

Participating dealers are Abenson's, Automatic Centre, Anson's, Ambassador, SM Appliance, Sogo, Waltermart and Western Marketing.

The S.I.P. is a product endorsed by SIPnotized, a year long promotion of BPI Credit Card products and services which includes Mad About Fitness, Travel Madness and Frequent User Extension.







ELECTROWORLD

Check out more than 40 items NO INTEREST Zero% INSTALLMENT

HOT HOT HOT deals at BPI Madness

ACEtech MP 7216IV 1W
Intel Pentium IV 1.6 Ghz
128MB memory
40GB Hard Drive
52x CD ROM Drive
internal modem
17" color monitor
speakers
Windows XP OEM
NO INTEREST Zero% 3 months INSTALLMENT
P35,995 P2,154.12*

TOSHIBA
Satellite 1800 A311
Intel Pentium III 1 Ghz
128 MB memory
20 GB Hard Drive
integrated floppy drive
8MB Video Memory
24x CD ROM Drive
internal modem with LANCARD
Li Ion battery
13.3" TFT Screen
Windows ME OS
FREE! Palm M100 PDA
P88,000 P5,266.36*

hp invent
Printer & Scanner Bundle
HP DESKJET 656C
600x300 dpi resolution
6ppm mono : 3ppm color
USB interface
HP SCANJET 2200
600 dpi resolution
USB interface
preview at 8sec colored at 49sec
NO INTEREST Zero% 3 months INSTALLMENT
P8,888 P531.90*

palm M500 Handheld
Slim, sleek silver casing
8MB memory
Dual expansion capability
addressbook, to do list, calendar, memopad, expense
and other classic PALM applications
NO INTEREST Zero% 3 months INSTALLMENT
P16,995 P1,017.07*

0% installment only at BPI interest booth

VISIT OUR BRANCHES

SM Pampanga	(045) 961-7176 or 60
SM City North EDSA	9279525 , 9240014
SM City Fairview	4186064 or 72
SM Manila	5248310 or 15
Binondo	2425490, 2413572
SM Megamall	6331624 or 25
Park Square 1	8136154 : 8132776
Waltermart Makati	8929119 or 20
Alabang Town Center	7723254 or 55
Abenson Alabang	8509862 or 8508708
SM Southmall	8800404 or 05
Waltermart Sta Rosa	5268575 or (049)5691241

VISIT US!
BPI INSTALLMENT MADNESS
EDSA CUPOLA (near Swatch store)
Ayala Center Glorietta, Makati
March 6 to March 24, 2002

ALEXIS JEWELRY
EDSA CUPOLA
SUNKEN AREA ACTIVITY CENTER
SWATCH
AYALA MALL
CINDERELLA

Prices and specifications may change without prior notice. Visual may vary from actual item. *Installment computed using 24 months BPI rates. *Promo valid until March 24, 2002 only.

BPI

BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS

Ayala Avenue, Makati City

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION

December 31, 2001

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Items	P 9,562,073,790
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas	11,348,975,398
Due from Other Banks	17,593,189,607
Interbank Loans Receivable	2,361,250,000
Trading Account Securities (Net)	5,278,485,273
Investment in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments (Net)	110,083,437,411
Loans, Discounts and Advances (Net)	188,175,051,926
Bank Premises, Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment (Net)	10,591,279,075
Assets Attributable to Insurance Operations	12,877,352,341
Other Assets (Net)	31,173,863,717
TOTAL ASSETS	**P 399,044,958,538**

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

Demand Deposits	P 33,778,393,644
Savings Deposits	216,253,810,031
Time Deposits	66,644,023,331
Total Deposits	316,676,227,006
Due to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas	193,355,882
Due to Other Banks	955,347,993
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders	2,708,521,924
Bills Payable	5,853,769,468
Liabilities Attributable to Insurance Operations	10,521,254,000
Other Liabilities	13,533,124,158
TOTAL LIABILITIES	**P 350,441,600,431**
Minority Interest in Subsidiaries	P 299,970,095
Capital Stock	P 15,386,818,576
Surplus	31,992,606,354
Surplus Reserves	923,963,082
TOTAL CAPITAL	**P 48,303,388,012**
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL	**P 399,044,958,538**

CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS

Assets Held Under Trust and Investment Management Agreements	P 176,225,242,589
Bills for Collection	5,005,588,804
Spot/Future Exchange Bought	8,860,773,106
Spot/Future Exchange Sold	23,584,378,681
Unused Commercial Letters of Credit	4,359,548,135
Other Contingent Accounts	2,756,938,152

Transform your kitchen into a gallery

KITCHENS of yesterday were simply square rooms where you could cook and eat meals. It simply consisted of the ho-hum gas stove, possibly an oven, and the dining place. This is no longer the case. Today's kitchen, where all cooking and baking are done, also serves as a place where family members and guests hang out and talk about each other's activities for the day while having refreshments. It has evolved from simply being a work area into a social area.

BUILT-IN and freestanding appliances by Ariston, Italy's No. 1

Indeed, the modern kitchen is now as much an entertainment area as the living room. More and more homeowners are turning to architects and interior designers for help in transforming their once simply functional kitchen into a designer kitchen.

Built-in appliances are being incorporated into designs to allow more workspace and ease traffic flow. Not only are they space-saving, they are also attractive and easy to maintain. The cooktops, ovens, dishwashers and even washing machines fit neatly into the panels or cabinets, giving the kitchen a clean, minimalist and modern look.

While built-in appliances are ideal for people whose houses are just in the construction stage, modern-day free-standing cookers work best for those who wish to spruce up and update their existing kitchens. The latest freestanding cookers offer flexibility to the homeowner who wishes to upgrade his or her kitchen from a mere "gas stove area" into the gallery or even centerpiece of the house. Combine the cooker with the range hood and what you have is a kitchen set that not only cooks well but also looks (and smells) fresh.

Known for their keen aesthetic sense, the Italians have spearheaded the evolution of the cooker from being a mere functional kitchen tool into an aesthetic designer appliance. An increasing number of Filipinos are finding out for themselves that when it comes to designer kitchen appliance, Italians do it better.

In Italy, the leading kitchen appliance brand is Ariston. It has a complete line of cookers, hobs, range hoods, dishwashers, front-loading washing machines and dryers and refrigerators, all designed for the upscale, discriminating and sophisticated homeowner. Many would be surprised to find out that the established cooking brand in the Philippines is a virtual unknown in Italy.

Ariston is currently available in leading appliance centers nationwide such as SM Appliances, Anson Appliances and Western Marketing. The Ariston showroom may be reached through tel. nos. 631-8282, 887-0075, (032) 344-6926 for Cebu, (088) 272-6301 for Cagayan de Oro, or (082) 222-1181 for Davao.

Tefal brings out your best

TEFAL, a premium French cookware brand, is known to be one of Europe's largest manufacturers of non-stick cookware and remains to be the leading brand in the industry.

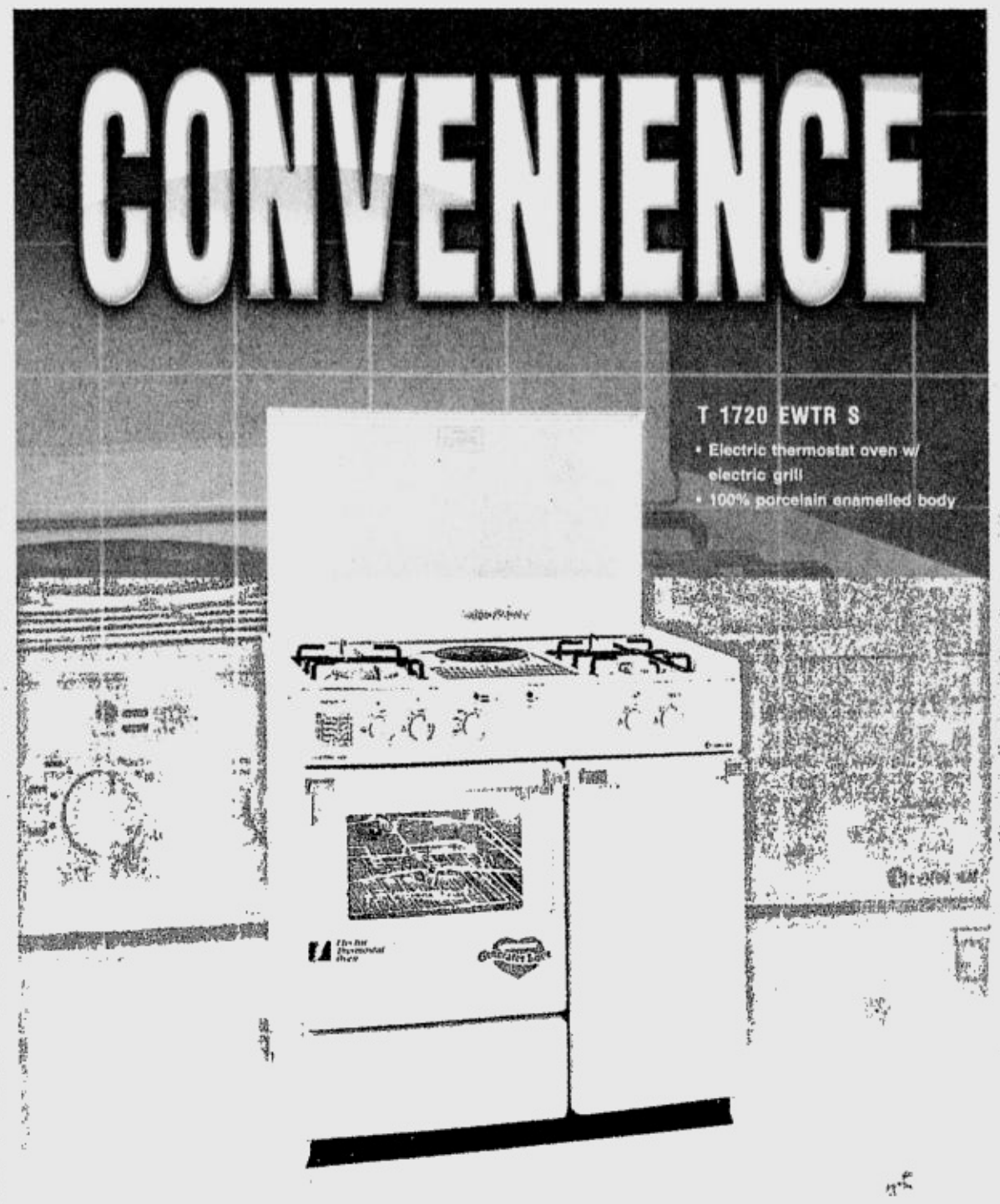
A few years back, Tefal also introduced its own line of small kitchen and homecare appliances to the European market. It is now considered to be the market leader in steam irons, deep fryers and cordless kettles.

Today, Tefal applies its skills and experience to the youngest customers with the new Tefal Baby Home line of baby care appliances.

Tefal cookware and appliances have been in the Philippine market for at least five years and have established the brand as number one in the premium homecare market.

Tefal cookware and appliances are exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corporation and available at leading department and appliance stores nationwide.

CONVENIENCE



720 WTR
• 1 turbo, 1 large and 2 medium gas top burners w/ electronic ignition
• 1 (180mm) fast heat hotplate w/ pilot light indicator
• Gas thermostat oven w/ gas grill
• Timer
• 100% porcelain enamelled body

720 WR
• 1 turbo, 1 large, and 2 medium gas top burners w/ electronic ignition
• 1 (180mm) fast heat hotplate w/ pilot light indicator
• Gas thermostat oven w/ gas grill
• 100% porcelain enamelled body

700 WR
• 1 turbo, 1 large and 2 medium gas top burners w/ electronic ignition
• Gas thermostat oven w/ gas grill
• 100% porcelain enamelled body

The **La Germania 700** Series freestanding cookers are designed with intelligent use of space. Built with versatility and convenience in mind.

So why settle for anything less?

Available in 7 models.

laGERMANIA

Don't settle for anything less

Visit your nearest appliance stores nationwide.

Ranges • Stoves • Range Hoods • Cooktops • Built-in Ovens • Washing Machines • Chest Freezers

Visit us at: www.lagermania.com.ph

Panasonic

Go home... into the movies!

... and find yourself inside the stunning surround realism of the Panasonic Mini Component System.

And Now: 3 Premieres right in your own home for FREE:

SEE STANDEE FOR PROMO DETAILS. PROMO PERIOD: FEBRUARY 1-MARCH 31,2002

The **Panasonic SC-AK188 Mini Component System.** Experience the air-chopping, chest-thumping, mind-blowing new super-realism of the movies. Right in your own home.

• 5-VCD/CD Changer with 5 Direct play keys • Dolby Pro Logic Surround and 6-Ch Discrete Inputs with 5-Speaker Package • Super Woofer drive system with Bi-Amp Bi-Wiring configuration • MP3 Player • Surround Sound • 3200 Watts Home Theater Mode

FREE 3 VCD for every purchase of any model of **Panasonic Mini or Micro Component VCD.**

VCD Models available: **SC-AK122 • SC-AK177 • SC-AK188 • SC-AK133 • SC-DK10 • SC-PM141 • SC-PM111 • SC-PM08**

Poll names GE appliances as US' most preferred

THE WIDELY quoted Louis Harris Poll from the United States released the results of its latest survey – among the brands rated as offering the best products and services in America, General Electric came out for the second straight year as the white line appliance brand most often mentioned in the survey, beating other brands by a wide margin. The survey results reconfirm the appliance giant's claim as "America's Most Preferred Appliance Brand."

The Harris Poll is widely followed not only in the United States but also around the world. Results of this poll are frequently quoted in the media, receiving thousands of mentions annually. The latest Harris Poll was conducted online within the United States between March 29 to April 2, 2001, among a nationwide cross section of 2,641 adults.

Professional builders and remodelers seem to confirm the Harris survey. GE has, for the past six years, emerged as the leading source of appliances in the United States according to

the Professional Builder's 2000 Brand Use Study. This means that GE is the name most trusted by building professionals and experts in the United States.

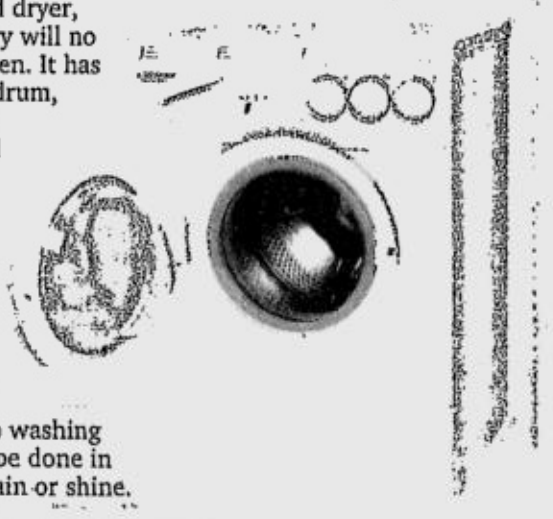
Furthermore, in Asia, readers of trusted magazine Reader's Digest, have voted GE the Superbrand Gold Awardee both in the Philippines and all of Asia for two consecutive years.

GE Appliances' new Philippine distributor is CYA Industries, a newly incorporated company bringing with it over 35 years of experience in the appliance industry. Its service requirements are supplied by Quality Circuits Services, a consumer welfare desk accredited by the Philippines' Department of Trade and Industry. True to GE's reputation of being concerned with total customer satisfaction, this makes GE Appliances the first American appliance brand whose service operations are accredited by the local government agency. Spare parts are readily available as there is an automated link between CYA and GE Appliances' global parts center in Louisville, Kentucky.

For more info on GE Appliances, call 631-8282 or 887-0075. GE appliances are currently available in leading appliance centers nationwide such as SM Appliance, Anson Appliance and Western Marketing.

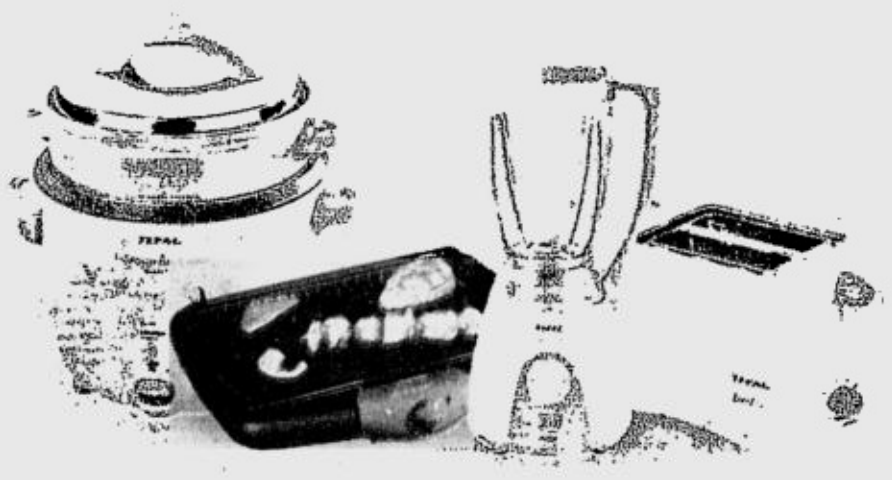
La Germania WDAS 5800
laundry made easy, rain or shine

DIRTY laundry? No problem. With the La Germania WDAS 5800 washer and dryer, doing the laundry will no longer be a burden. It has a stainless steel drum, sturdy enough to withstand a load of laundry. The La Germania WDAS 5800 also comes with an effective programmed wash cycle and a programmed built-in dryer, so washing and drying will be done in no time at all, rain or shine.



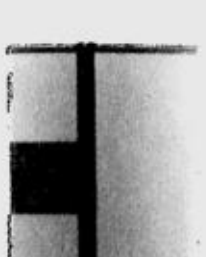
TEFAL®

brings out your best



Tefal, the French cookware leader,
is also famous for its quality small appliances.

Exclusively Distributed by: Rustan Marketing Corporation Tel.No. 890-9703 • Available at: Metro Manila • Rustan's Department Store • SM Homeworld • SM Appliance Center • Ansons Trade • Ansons Landmark • Robinson's Galleria • The Landmark • Abensons Alabang • Waltermart Calamba • Fair N Square • Best Choice Multi-Sales • Friend Ann Merchandise • Jo-Ren Jewelry & General Mechandise • J & R Electronics • Sin Kian Heng Emporium • Tiptop Trading • Wilnas Enterprise • Worldwide Audio Video • Conwell Enterprise • Crossings Dept Store • Shopwise • Luzon • Blue Ocean Department Store • Golden Crest • National Bazaar • Visayas • RCC Cebu • SM Cebu • Altura's Supermarket • Atrium • Bohol Quality Store • Cang's Department Store • Gaisano Country Mall Cebu City • Gaisano Ormoc City • Imperial Appliance Iloilo • Lee Super Plaza • Lopue's East • Lopue's Mandalagan • Pretty Jade • Kenli Enterprises • Servando's Department Store • The Pelts • White Gold • Mindanao • Felcris Supermarket • Fitmart • Gaisano General Santos • Gaisano Mall Davao • Goldenbell Davao • Goldenbell Zamboanga • JS Gaisano Citimall • JS Gaisano Tagum • Megahaus • Metro Plaza • Ororama Superstore • Park N Shop • Plaza Fair CDO • Victoria Plaza(Southwoods) • SM Davao



Introducing the GE Stainless Steel Refrigerators.

From the world-famous maker of the classic white refrigerator comes a stunning new line that combines sophistication and functionality. Our Side-by-Side and Top Mount refs are made of pure, highest-grade **SUS 304** stainless steel. Sleek, strong and sure to last a lifetime. And because it's a GE, you have more reason to smile.

GE Appliances

We bring good things to life.

Stainless Steel models available in 12, 15, 16, 19, 20, 24, 26 cu. ft. Buy your GE Appliances now at leading appliance stores nationwide. Call 631-8282 or 887-0075 for inquiries. http://www.geappliances-philippines.com